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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

DRAWING ON WOMEN: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN AND SUFFRAGE IMAGERY IN THE MASSES, 1913-1917

BY ©

MARIE CLIFFORD

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN

HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1991

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DRAWING ON WOMEN: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN AND SUFFRAGE IMAGERY IN THE MASSES, 1913-1917

SUBMITTED BY MARIE CLIFFORD

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN THE HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the ways that suffrage imagery and other depictions of women were mobilized as political symbols in the graphics of The Masses, a socialist literary magazine published monthly in Greenwich Village from 1911 to 1917. The Masses, whose roster of artists included John Sloan, Stuart Davis, and Charles Allen Winter, typically invested in images of women to signify the "lyrical" left's re-working of socialist and suffragist ideologies. Thus the magazine's drawings of women shed light on shifts in American socialist iconography and ideologies from the high point of the movement in 1912, to its fragmentation in the mid-1910s, to its decline in 1917 following the nation's entry into World War I. Similarly, they also provide insight into the fluctuating discourse surrounding women's drive for the ballot.

Representations of suffragists, New Women, working-class women, and allegorical female figures were used as a point of identification and differentiation for the lyrical left from not only orthodox socialists, but other political forces as well. My project demonstrates that the role these pictures played in this process of signification is complicated and contradictory. The success of The Masses' images of women in conveying convey revolutionary ideals was uneven. Audiences became confused by the purpose of these drawings, often because the very coherence of the journal's female imagery depended on a set of bourgeois visual codes. As a result, contemporaries had difficulty in making a specifically socialist and feminist reading of The Masses' representation of women. Moreover, at times of crisis and heated debate (such as the eve of World War I), these pictures were cited as evidence of mere "Bohemianism" and a lack of commitment to the leftist cause. In other words, during periods when "hard" political commentary was valued above all else, the female form was not thought of as a useful means of questioning the social order. My thesis, therefore, provides a new explanation for why the lyrical left's investment in female imagery was rejected by the "hard" left of later years, when the idealized male worker came to dominate American socialist iconography.

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INTRODUCTION

This study examines the ways that suffrage imagery and other depictions of women were mobilized as political symbols in the graphics of The Masses, a socialist literary magazine published monthly in Greenwich Village from 1911 to 1917. The Masses, whose roster of artists included John Sloan and Stuart Davis, typically drew on images of women as part of a re-working of socialist and suffragist ideologies. Representations of suffragists, New Women, working-class women, and allegorical female figures were used as a point of identification and differentiation for the lyrical left from not only orthodox socialists, but other political forces such as the anarchists and more mainstream reformers. Thus the magazine's drawings of women shed light on shifts in American socialist iconography and ideologies from the high point of the movement in 1912 to its fragmentation in the mid-1910s, to its decline in 1917 following the nation's entry into World War I. Similarly, they also provide insight into the fluctuating discourse surrounding women's drive for the ballot.

My project also addresses the relationship between female imagery and the development of twentieth century American social realism. Generally, socialist iconography is closely associated with images of male workers. On the other hand, the female figure is virtually synonymous with "high" art and bourgeois culture, and hence is conventionally regarded as politically neutral. Yet The Masses featured depictions of women in every issue from 1913 to its demise in 1917. Of these, approximately twenty-seven appeared on the front cover. By comparison, drawings of male laborers are found on the cover only eight times. This thesis will pursue the broader implications of this discrepancy by examining what The Masses' representations of women reveal about the role of gender in conveying revolutionary ideals. It will also ask why the "hard" left of later years cited the journal's images of women as evidence of mere "Bohemianism" (implying a lack of commitment to the cause of social and political change) when during The Masses' hey-day these pictures often comprised the journal's most popular illustrations. However, to understand the full impact of these works, it is necessary to examine them within the context of the multiple definitions of femininity and conflicting opinions on the nature of political reform that characterized the Progressive era. Frequently, the discourse surrounding the magazine's illustrations intersected a broad range of debates that moved beyond shifts in the American art world to include the changing status of women in society and definitions of national identity.

When it was founded by Piet Vlag in 1911, the journal was conceived as a venture in non-profit cooperative ownership. This first version was associated with more doctrinaire socialism and the Socialist Party of America itself. It tended to rely on written texts rather than on visual imagery to bring art to "the masses". Due to financial difficulties, The Masses changed hands in late 1912. Under the new editorship of Max Eastman, The Masses became the unofficial voice of U.S. socialism's Bohemian fringe: the Greenwich Village radicals. This group concentrated less on strict class and economic critiques of American society, preferring instead to focus on cultural issues. Their socialism is best described as broadly-conceived, where disparate ideas borrowed from anarchism, Freudian psychology, feminism, and more mainstream liberalism were fused together. Wishing to emulate such European publications as L'Assiette au Beurre and Simplicissimus, the editors of The Masses believed that artwork could actively shape and promote its brand of radicalism. A statement of editorial policy from December, 1912, made their conception of visual imagery explicit:

> We are going to make THE MASSES a popular Socialist magazine — a magazine of pictures and lively writing.
>
> Humorous, serious, illustrative and decorative pictures of a stimulating kind. There are no magazines in America which measure up in radical art and freedom of expression to the foreign satirical journals. We think we can produce one, and we have on our staff eight of the best known artists and illustrators in the country ready to contribute to it their most individual work. ...We shall produce with the best technique the best magazine pictures at command in New York.

> ...we shall no longer compete in any degree with the more heavy and academic reviews. We shall tune our reading matter up to the key of our pictures... .
>
> We shall have no further part in the factional disputes within the Socialist Party; we are opposed to the dogmatic spirit which creates and sustains these disputes. Our appeal will be to the masses, both Socialist and non-Socialist, with entertainment, education, and the livelier kinds of propaganda.[1]

A month later another brief passage relative to editorial policy appeared for the first time. It characterized the publication's subversive stance and was subsequently printed in each issue.

> This magazine is owned and published cooperatively by its editors. It has no dividends to pay, and nobody is trying to make money out of it. A revolutionary and not a reform magazine; a magazine with a sense of humor and no respect for the respectable; frank; arrogant; impertinent; searching for true causes; a magazine directed against rigidity and dogma wherever it is found; printing what is too naked or true for a money-making press; a magazine whose final policy is to do what it pleases and conciliate nobody, not even its readers — a free magazine.[2]

Such sentiments proved prophetic. At times The Masses indeed seemed to "please nobody," and quickly gained a reputation for provoking controversy. For example, from 1913 to 1917, the magazine was sued for libel, refused distribution in New York's subway newsstands, dropped by distributors in Boston and Philadelphia, denied entry into Canada, and banished from the library and bookstore of Columbia University.[3] However, it was its opposition to U.S. intervention in the First World War that eventually led to The Masses' demise. Initially this stance galvanized the editorial staff, causing divisions and strife within the organization itself. Because the journal's artists increasingly lost editorial control over the captions that accompanied their pictures (anti-war statements were often affixed to imagery that had nothing to do with the hostilities), a number of them left The Masses in 1916 in what is now deemed the "Artists' Strike". Among those artists who disassociated themselves from The Masses were John Sloan and Stuart Davis. Yet by the summer of 1917, the publication faced even more severe consequences of its opposition to the war than staff rebellion. At this time the nation had entered World War I, and in June the U.S. Congress passed the Espionage Act, which essentially prohibited anti-war activity. Since a provision of the Act allowed the Postmaster General to confiscate all matter urging "treason", The Masses could no longer be delivered through the mail. Without access to postal service, the magazine could not survive, and it ceased publication at the end of 1917.

I do not intend to simply reiterate the history of The Masses as it is revealed in its images of women. Rather I hope to integrate these pictures with that history, to reveal the often contradictory role they played in signifying the lyrical left's subversive stance. Given the sheer volume of female imagery, it is remarkable how little scholarly attention these drawings have received. Cultural historians tend to perceive The Masses' graphics as peripheral to its "real" history (its legal entanglements, its relationship to official socialist activity, and to Village radicalism). The journal's representations of women — collapsed into a single category — are viewed as a reflection of an editorial tendency or, worse, as illustrations of historical events. This practice reinforces the notion that visual material is a neutral vehicle for ideas worked up elsewhere and applied to an appropriate set of images. One cannot assume that The Masses' images of women were representative of any one view — feminist, socialist, or otherwise — or that they served a uniform purpose for one easily identifiable group.[4]

My project, therefore, is divided into two sections. Using specific case studies, the first section examines the different levels in which representations of women carried political and social significance. After discussing The Masses' interest in the Progressive era women's movement and in American realism, I look at the varying degrees of success these pictures achieved in term of conveying revolutionary ideals. I am particularly concerned with images of women who seemed to challenge middle-class definitions of femininity: working-class women, black ghetto inhabitants, and Stuart Davis' mysterious "wandering" women. To understand how these ostensibly "apolitical" pictures (which were typical of the magazine's final years) may have continued to operate as political symbols, I analyze the periodical's images of Isadora

Duncan. These drawings provide a useful case study of how socialist ideologies were re-worked as the stance of the American left shifted from an offensive to a largely defensive position after the nation had entered the war.

The second section deals with The Masses' suffrage imagery. Rather than surveying this body of work, I focus on representative examples from the years 1913, 1915, and 1917. Suffrage-related pictures published at these points signal the complexity of the lyrical left's response to the changing discourse surrounding the drive for female enfranchisement. They also provide insights into how fluctuating definitions of femininity mediated Progressive era social, political, and national values for both vanguard and mainstream groups. While appearing to be at odds, dissident and establishment ideologies were often mutually reinforcing and, as is demonstrated in The Masses' suffrage illustrations, worked to uphold pervasive stereotypes about women and their claim to political power.

Toward the end of the 1910s, an anonymous Village wit composed a brief jingle which questioned the relationship between The Masses' artwork and its radicalism. It reads:

> They draw nude women for The Masses
> Thick, fat, ungainly lasses
> How does that help the working classes?[5]

Although the poem is often reprinted, the fact that it singles out the female figure as a problematic political symbol has drawn little notice. Yet the humor of the piece is based on an assumption that it is somehow inappropriate to use the female form as a means of questioning the social order. What this reveals about contemporary attitudes toward women in particular as well as the role that gender plays in politically-engaged imagery in general is the subject of this study.

NOTES

1. "Editoral Notice," The Masses 4 (December 1912):2.
2. Masses 4 (January 1913):2.
3. The Associated Press sued the editors of The Masses for libel in 1913. The suit stemmed from an editorial cartoon by Art Young which depicted the AP pouring "lies" into a pool of "suppressed facts", "slander" and "hatred of labor organizations". The image impled that the Syndicate had deliberately held back key facts in its coverage of a West Virginian coal miners' strike. The charges were dropped two years later.
4. Histories of The Masses are found in Leslie Fishbein, Rebels in Bohemia: The Radicals of the Masses, 1911-1917 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Richard Fitzgerald, Art and Politics: Cartoonists of the Masses and Liberator (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1973); William O'Neill, Echoes of Revolt: The Masses, 1911-1917 (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1966); Rebecca Zurier, Art for the Masses: A Radical Magazine and its Graphics, 1911-1917 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988). Although Fishbein's study examines the magazine's investment in feminism in detail, an analysis of visual imagery is conspicuously absent. Zurier's book is the most comprehensive discussion of The Masses' graphics to date. However, she does not address the journal's representations of women.
5. Cited in Fishbein, p. iv. The poem first appeared in Quill (October 1917):12.

SECTION I

THE MASSES' REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN

Representations of women found in The Masses worked to define political and cultural values associated with the American left. In part, this signification draws upon traditions of political iconography where images of women are used to symbolize, shape and promote abstract virtues or national ideals. At the same time, the specific meanings of the magazine's images of women are firmly rooted in Progressive era concerns about the changing social roles of women, debates over the nature of radical cultural transformation and shifts in the American art world.

DEVELOPMENTS IN AMERICAN SOCIALIST ICONOGRAPHY

Charles Allen Winter's cover illustration for the June, 1912 issue depicts a figure commonly associated with recognizable socialist iconography: the idealized image of a male worker.[1] The drawing, based on conventions of nineteenth century academic art, employs the motif of the heroic laborer. The figure is deliberately classical; his facial features are symmetrical and in perfect proportion, while his neck is immoderately muscled. Furthermore, Winter — who studied at the Academie Julian in Paris with Adolphe William Bourguereau — made use of dramatic light and shadow contrasts, thereby creating a sense of theatricality and sculptural volume. Such pictorial conventions fit into the formal language of allegory. Inscribed as The Proletarian [Fig. 1], the image signifys more than a particular class of worker. He is symbolic of the entire socialist movement.

By 1912 audiences were thoroughly conditioned to recognize the political efficacy of the idealized male worker. Labor iconography had long been used to signify national and political virtues in both European and American art.[2] Allegorical figures connoted a range of narratives that fit into multiple levels of political discourse. Images of this kind were widely circulated in "high" art forms (sculpture, academic painting) and in the illustrations of both the socialist and mainstream press. However, these factors alone do not explain how Winter's Proletarian operated as a symbol for socialism. To fully understand the political currency of this figure and its relationship to early American socialism, it is necessary to briefly examine the artistic practices and historical conditions that contributed to the symbolic value of the heroic laborer in a specifically American context.

As Maurice Agulhon has noted, masculine symbolism in the socialist movement may be traced to iconography that emerged after the establishment of the French Third Republic in 1870. Previously, radical political forces had favored such female allegorical figures as Liberty and Marianne. After 1870 such figures grew increasing problematic "since this 'ideal woman' could symbolize both a state (rapidly to be dominated by the bourgeoisie), and the movement (first radical then socialist) which was directly confronting that State."[3] Representations of male workers modelled after classical figures (the warrior, the athlete) and accompanied by such accoutrements as picks and hammers frequently — although not exclusively — were mobilized in late nineteenth century socialist iconography. Well known examples of this tendency are found in the work of the Belgian sculptor, Constantin Meunier. Significantly, Meunier's work was introduced to American audiences through the socialist press.[4]

Despite certain affinities and correspondences to European political iconography, American imagery of this kind was produced in another cultural context and connoted a very different set of meanings. First of all, the Liberty goddess never carried the same symbolic resonance for Americans as she had for French citizens. Although allegorical female figures were not uncommon in American art, the essential accoutrements of the Liberty character — her Phrygian cap (originally a Roman symbol of prisoner status, it was generally regarded by the eighteenth century as a sign of manumission) and staff — were too politically controversial to be used in an official capacity. The obvious links to slavery rendered such iconography problematic given the country's deep divisions over this volatile issue.[5] Because of this, female allegories based on the Liberty image were used to signify a multiplicity of national ideas, such as Columbia, Manifest Destiny and the Genius of America, that lacked the revolutionary ciphers of their European counterparts. In other words, these allegorical figures worked to define generalized concepts, all of which were mediated through the female body, but the single, fixed meaning of radical political struggle was largely absent.[6] Moreover, American conceptions of liberty underwent substantial shifts over the course of the nation's history. Accordingly, iconography dealing with ideas of freedom was in constant flux. Whether it was produced inside or outside of official discourses, this politically engaged imagery largely operated as a site for defining such symbolic constructs as democracy and "Americanness".[7]

Secondly, the representation of labor is not merely a straightforward depiction of different types of workers or various working conditions. Rather, labor imagery must be viewed as an active component within larger ideological processes. This is particularly true with regard to American labor iconography, since American democracy was — and is — popularly perceived as the fruit of a Puritan work ethic. Thus imagery dealing with labor is intimately caught up in notions of the egalitarian nature of U. S. society — perhaps one of the most enduring cornerstones of the nation's self-identity. The symbolic power of labor imagery in American culture could simultaneously work to uphold and contest the political and social establishment. Such portrayals could reinforce the myths of the self-reliant, independent worker (an idea that ties into perceptions of "Americanness" and liberty) or call into question those forces — cultural, political, social, and economic — which mistreated or exploited the American worker, a symbol of American democracy itself. This signification is further complicated by the association of labor with social order, a notion which gained currency in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore a tendency existed among various political factions to invest a certain amount of moral authority and social virtue in representations of laborers. Consequently labor iconography tapped directly into the national consciousness and functioned to shape and promote a wide range of social and political debates.

In the pre-war period there was no set canon of left-wing or distinctly revolutionary art. It should be recalled, however, that the radical potential of artwork is historically specific and its political significance is discursively constructed. Artistic strategies aimed at furthering the socialist cause in the U. S. involved a necessary engagement with images and styles already in circulation to ensure that socialist iconography would be accepted as meaningful. Labor imagery provided a useful point of departure for socialist artists since it was so strongly linked to ideas about the equality of economic opportunity *and* "American" qualities of individuality and liberty. Moreover, American socialists during the first decade of the twentieth century were forcefully and deliberately working to emphasize the *indigenous* nature of the class struggle. Attempting to quell the public's fears that socialism was inherently foreign and "unnatural" to American thought, they played down violent revolutionary rhetoric in favor of arguments more attuned to mainstream political language. For instance, socialists claimed that a Cooperative Commonwealth, in which class and economic disparities would be eliminated, would restore those egalitarian principles espoused by the Founding Fathers that were now being eroded by capitalism. Using terms that are reminiscent of the Declaration of Independence, Eugene V. Debs stated, "The end of class struggles and class rule, of master and slave, of ignorance and vice, of poverty and shame, of cruelty and crime — the birth of Freedom, the dawn of brotherhood, the beginning of MAN... This is socialism!"[8] In keeping with this effort to demonstrate the "Americanness" of U. S. socialism, imagery used to further the cause drew from pictorial sources available in established political iconography. Such imagery actively participated in the foundation of socialist ideologies; it did not simply reflect or mirror existing political arguments.

Throughout the Progressive era the dominant mode of political discourse was grounded in protest and reform efforts. The excesses of unregulated industrial capitalism had caused much of the American public to call for increased government intervention in the business sector. Labor had grown increasingly militant in its demands for fairer wages and better working conditions. Anxiety over a perceived moral decay led many reformers to agitate for tougher legislation dealing with prostitution and the consumption of alcohol. By the time of the 1912 presidential election, the rhetoric of revolution had permeated mainstream politics. Woodrow Wilson's Democrats called for a "New Freedom" and the Progressive Party, led by former president, Theodore Roosevelt, heralded a "New Nationalism". A sense of domestic crisis, combined with a growing awareness of the nation's emerging status as a world power, served to politicize a remarkable number of groups, ranging from urban professionals and farmers to immigrants and industrial workers. Middle-class activists generally relied on a belief in rational, democratic progress, and emphasized legislative reform to restore order to society without challenging the existing system. Some radical factions, such as the militant trade union, the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies), rejected this legislative approach and advocated instead "direct action" tactics, such as industrial sabotage, to exact change.[9]

Partially due to this growth in social consciousness, American socialism met with a level of respectability and electoral success it would never again experience. In 1912 the Socialist Party of America's presidential candidate, Eugene V. Debs, attracted one million votes, or six percent of the total electorate. Party candidates were elected to public office throughout the country. Two years earlier Congress had welcomed its first Socialist member, Victor Berger of Wisconsin. The socialist press also gained considerable strength; 323 periodicals were publishing in 1912. That year, journals such as Appeal to Reason, could boast a circulation of almost 800,000, while the total circulation of the socialist press in general exceeded two million by 1913.[10] Moreover, the mainstream press began to treat the movement as a credible and viable force. Socialism not only received favorable treatment in popular periodicals, but party activists themselves, such as Victor Berger, contributed articles to such cornerstones of the capitalist press as William Randolph Hearst's New York Journal. Perhaps this leftward trend is best exemplified by the 1912 conversion to socialism of the popular monthly, Metropolitan magazine.

Substantial shifts in American political thought facilitated a degree of maneuvering space for the development of socialist iconography. (In fact, this process of visually representing socialist content would reach a turning point in 1912, the year that U. S. socialism achieved its greatest momentum.) Yet the inevitable paradox remains: how could artwork contribute to meaningful cultural transformation if it was forced to comply with the traditional conventions of mainstream representation? There was always the danger that images supposed to convey a class critique could not be distinguished from similar images found in bourgeois culture. For instance, picturesque representations of peasants and laborers had long been a mainstay of academic or establishment imagery. In this way, pictures meant to criticize the status quo may have backfired, ultimately reinforcing the hegemony of dominant social and political groups. As will be discussed further on, either directly or indirectly this very paradox would be addressed in the imagery that appeared in The Masses in the years following 1912.

Charles Allen Winter's Proletarian [Fig. 1] belongs to a set of signifying processes which may be traced to the turn-of-the-century socialist art practice. Artistic styles and imagery associated with the endeavors of middle-class reformers dominated most socialist artwork. For example, in the 1890s, Jane Addams, a nationally prominent reformer, attempted to use Hull House, her settlement home, for new immigrants for "the exaltation of art for the benefit of the masses."[11] Employing the methods of the British Arts and Crafts movement, Hull House adopted the attitude that craftwork would provide the lower classes with a morally uplifting alternative to machine manufactured commercial articles. Hull House's primary focus was on educational programs. Similar ideas were further promulgated in the United States in the writings and lectures of the English artist, Walter Crane. A proponent of Fabian socialism and a follower of William Morris, Crane was well known for his allegorical studies of socialist virtues and capitalist vice. As Lisa Tickner has observed, Crane adopted the ideal feminine type found in the paintings of the Pre-Raphaelites and various nature goddesses for use in socialist iconography.[12] Since his designs were widely circulated in the U.S. at a key moment in the formation of American socialism (i.e. 1890-1910), Crane's decorative motifs and symbolic narratives set a pictorial standard for art associated with the socialist movement.[13]

Crane's use of fixed signs of femininity (nature imagery, flowers, fruit) to signify abstract socialist concepts is significant in the development of the iconography of socialism. It ties socialism to definitions of respectable femininity prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such notions include women as guardians of morality, exemplars of self-sacrifice, bound to their domestic duty and intimately caught up in the forces of nature. The manufacture of socialist ideology in visual form involved utlizing these ideal types. Struggling to counter charges that socialists lived immoral lifestyles, and sought to debase the family and pure womanhood, American activists waged a campaign to claim accepted standards of morality for the Socialist Party. As Mari Jo Buhle comments, "They [championed] the defense of the family against ruination, of womanly virtue against despoliation, as necessary concomitants to electoral victory."[14] The vocabulary of a moral crusade pervaded much of Crane's imagery. For instance, images from Crane's Cartoons for the Cause — published in 1896, its twelve designs were reproduced worldwide — contain many references to medieval chivalry, and female personifications of such virtues as Justice and Victory. It is little wonder that Crane's work appealed to an audience that felt, in the words of Frances Willard, that socialism "is the higher way; it enacts into everyday living the ethics of Christ's gospel. Nothing else will do it."[15] In the guise of Crane's ideal feminine types, moral and political values were drawn together to offer testimony of socialist respectability and righteousness. Thus a socialist identity was actively constructed and mediated through the category of woman, a powerful sign of cultural and social order but not, in this instance, of the status quo.[16] (Although, as is discussed in Section II, these representations could be manipulated by mainstream groups to project an image of the status quo.) Viewers were assured that socialism posed no danger to institutions such as the family and was, in fact, working to restore order to a society threatened by capitalism run amok.

Several of Crane's designs appeared in The Masses' immediate predecessor, Comrade (New York, 1901-1905). Edited by the socialist theorist and future contributor to The Masses, John Spargo, its goal was "to develop the aesthetic impulse in the Socialist movement, to utilize the talent we already have and to quicken into being aspirations that are latent."[17] Comrade's appeal was to the genteel tradition, a Victorian belief in the possibilities of art to facilitate progress and uphold morality. Illustrations rendered in an art nouveau style could be found alongside reprints of cartoons from European journals such as Der Wahre Jacob. Apart from Crane's allegorical figures, the magazine reproduced a number of paintings which depicted working people or "humble" subjects. For instance, a crayon study by Jean-François Millet entitled Washing Day appeared on the cover of the April, 1903, issue, and a month later the cover featured George Frederick Watts' The Seamstress. Both pictures portray working-class women, a laundress and seamstress respectively, wearily performing their assigned tasks. Such images of women's labor, however, were rare in Comrade. Most of its labor imagery focused on the plight of the exploited yet defiant male worker. Essentially the representations of men and women published in Comrade adhered to visual practices for picturing masculinity and femininity first codified in the nineteenth century. That is, the ideology of "separate spheres" embodied in labor imagery was reinforced in Comrade's illustrations. Men were pictured as active, public figures; women were shown as supportive accoutrements or metaphorical signifiers of working-class grief and misery.[18]

This tendency to visualize working-class oppression through female figures points to the power of images of women to convey a sense of victimization. Since classical times, representations of women had been used as symbols of mourning and emotional distress. The French neoclassical painter, Jacques-Louis David, frequently employed female figures to underline that women's domesticity and victimization was the direct counterpoint to men's concerns of duty and the struggle for power. Perhaps the most compelling American use of this gender dichotomy for political statement is Robert Koehler's painting, The Strike (1886). Koehler, who was a socialist sympathizer, created a storm of controversy when he exhibited the picture at the National Academy of Design's annual exhibition in 1886.[19] Although the subject of the work is a Pittsburgh mill workers' strike of the 1870s, audiences would have undoubtedly linked the painting to the infamous Haymarket rally of that year.[20] Koehler depicts a group of workers confronting the bourgeois owner of the mill. As the men rally together — some stand defiantly, one picks up a rock suggesting possible violence — a woman is shown pleading with one of the workers, while another woman stands away from the mob protectively shielding her children. On one level, the picture's female characters symbolize the economic hardship of the male laborers. On another level, the women operate as signs for domestic and social order. In this instance, unyielding to the laborers' demands, the capitalists and not the workers (which may have been the case in more conservative rendering) are implicated in disrupting the home and hence the very cornerstone of social stability.

Visual codes of this kind informed much twentieth century socialist iconography, which in turn shaped many socialist viewers' expectations. Notably, most often these representations were created by middle-class reformers and philanthropists. Ostensibly the art work published in Comrade and the early Masses was intended to "elevate" the masses through exposure to art and literature. However, there is little evidence that the working class read either magazine. Both journals were circulated among a few thousand party activists. Therefore the socialist iconography that developed on their pages is part of a wider network of middle-class discourse. While it was by no means a monolithic group, the reform-minded socialists and liberals who constituted the early Masses' audience would have been accustomed to and thus more comfortable with bourgeois systems of signification. This is an important factor in understanding why images derived from academic models or the middle-class press were favored. At the same time, The Masses' pictures had to be *differentiated* from those found in the mainstream press. To situate its images in a socialist context, the magazine often accompanied illustrations with long, drawn out "explanations". Readers were consistently reminded that art from a socialist perspective stood for "truth" in representation. As one contributor put it:

> We want interpreted not merely the glories of war, the saintliness of saints, the pale emotions of the cultured, but we want the senses of the people, the common herd, the masses, interpreted. In other words, we want Art realistic; we want life as it is and has been, not as it should be or should have been. ...Conventional people want a lie; we want the truth.[21]

In effect the publication's audience desired images of the "common herd" that they could read as "truthful". Fundamentally the magazine's representations of the working class were the products of a view from above. These pictures indicate the expectations and interests of a particular class of bourgeois reformers and point to the types of pictorial codes that this class would have found plausible and suitable.

Returning to Charles Allen Winter's Proletarian, we may observe how the picture signified socialist content for the early Masses' audience. The laborer is not engaged in a struggle or confrontation (or work, for that matter); there is no sign of rage or defiance or any other emotion in his facial expression. Rather, the close-up view focuses on his thoughtful, even philosophical facial expression. The physical power suggested by his strong features is held in check by his contemplative look. Great care has been taken to render the worker as a figure of reason and enlightenment. (Indeed, the figure may be a quotation of the Philosopher, a well-known classical type.) During the first decade of the twentieth century, American socialists stressed the logical inevitability of a classless society where wealth would be evenly distributed. They often stated that evolution — through the electoral process and legislative reforms — and not violent revolution would clear the way for the Cooperative Commonwealth. When asked in 1908 why socialists did not simply wait for capitalism to destroy itself, Eugene V. Debs responded, "...because we have minds. Human intelligence is a force of nature. It could assist the process of evolution by searching intelligently for the root of all evils as they arise."[22] In 1912, when political momentum seemed to be with the socialists, it was hardly in their interests to represent the working class as an antagonistic or dangerous force. Yet the effectiveness of Winter's Proletarian lies in the imprecise nature of just what it is the worker is thinking about. One contemporary summarized the potential of the proletariat as follows:

> [The] Proletaire is beginning to sense its power. The giant is rousing — rousing with the accumulated anger of the years stirring within him. He can feel the virtue of his pent-up strength, and he is learning the rights which are his. Unless these rights are voluntarily accorded him soon he will utilise his strength to secure them. ...The slums are thinking — thinking.[23]

The Proletarian derives its political efficacy from its links to classical types (the allegory of the republic in the U. S. was often based on classical renditions of presidents, as is found in John J. Barralet's, Sacred to the Memory of Washington, c. 1800) and from the conventional power of labor iconography to express and shape a national consciousness. In this case, however, the figure redefines a nationalistic visual vocabulary in socialist terms. Moreover, the latent strength or unrealized potential of the proletariat is constructed along masculine lines. The qualities of reason or power, values usually associated with the public sphere, were understood in a predominantly masculine symbolism. Walter Crane had used female allegorical figures as the embodiment of socialism, but his figures emphasize the movement's regenerative potential by focusing on it as a source of moral redemption. Winter's picture could only allude to potential action or heroic, monumental feats by employing a male character. A pervasive ideology of separate spheres authorized and validated (for The Masses' audience, at least) an idealized male worker as the source of socialist optimism. Thus while Crane's images of allegorical female figures would have been meaningful for contemporary audiences, in an American context masculine characters seemed more appropriate to the situation at hand. Conflating visual codes for depicting laborers and national figureheads (such as presidents), Winter's cover illustration constructed ideals of national and socialist unity in the guise of the proletariat.

WOMAN AND THE MASSES

Three years later, The Masses published a drawing by John Sloan entitled The Bachelor Girl [Fig. 2]. Unlike Winter's picture, the links to a particularly socialist content in Sloan's work are less clear. It depicts a lone woman, whose meager clothing and utilitarian bedroom identify her as working class. She is placed at the center of the composition and is holding up a dress as if she is contemplating it for some reason. To her left, a coat and hat lie on her bed; to her right is an open closet full of hat boxes and garments. These are framed by a wash basin and pitcher in the foreground. The bachelor girl, in essence, stands between accoutrements suggesting her world outside the apartment, and the intimate items of her personal life. The division between public and private spheres is literally mediated by a female figure. This concern for the intimate details of a working-class woman's life — a life that, as the title emphasizes, is without a man — is inherently tied to the reassessment and redefinition of left-wing ideology as it developed in the pages of The Masses after 1912.

By 1910 socialists could include among their numbers a significant group of fresh recruits, the "New Intellectuals". College educated and young, this new generation — sometimes labeled the lyrical left or Greenwich Village rebels — sought to transform socialism into a more dynamic entity. The Village's atmosphere of experimentation allowed the rebels (so-called because of their efforts to break free of the previous century's genteel tradition) to develop dissident ideas about art, politics, and lifestyle. Historian Christopher Lasch ascribes the group's involvement with radical politics to their desire for a more sweeping cultural transformation.[24] Hence all things that questioned dominant values and beliefs were imbued with political significance. How one wore one's hair, manner of dress, furniture, even personal liaisons, were thought of as forms of rebellion. Many were attracted to socialism because it provided them with a vantage point to launch their cultural critiques. Although the rebels were opposed to the party's pedantry, they were united with more orthodox socialists in their vilification of industrial capitalism, whose interests, it was believed, were inimical to creative expression.

Conveniently ignoring their own middle-class roots, the Village radicals attacked bourgeois conventions, such as Victorian morality, which they felt stifled their artistic and personal growth. Doctrinaire socialist texts were of little use to them. Instead the rebels drew inspiration from the writings of Freud, Bergson, Nietzsche, and Ibsen. This emphasis on subjective experience allowed them to view the working classes, especially the urban poor, differently than other socialists. Orthodox party members characterized the lower classes as victims of an oppressive economic system. The Village radicals, on the other hand, regarded this segment of society as "naturally" removed from the shackles of middle-class values and consequently more free; that somehow their everyday experience was more authentic. Ghetto inhabitants lived "life in the raw" and thus were engaged in more fruitful and creative activity ("the dance of life") than the upper classes.[25] Owing much to the ideas of the poet, Walt Whitman, the Village radicals perceived the working class as the true apostles of democracy. For them democracy was not merely a form of government but an expression of a national spirit found in the daily lives of average people. Accordingly, the forces that repressed the lower classes, like capitalism or middle class sexual mores, served to undermine the very backbone of democratic ideals and suffocate genuinely American character.

By stressing the importance of freedom over class struggle, the radical intelligentsia allied itself with the period's liberals.[26] Both groups felt that a fundamental restructuring of society was needed to allow a more authentic democracy to flourish. Unlike progressive reformers, who essentially called for pragmatic repairs to the existing political system, the members of the lyrical left and their liberal counterparts concentrated on cultural issues. They believed art and literature could regenerate society. For them liberty existed primarily on a personal level and could be fully experienced only through the production of art. The regenerative power attributed to art was also viewed as a sign of political resistance. More precisely, it was a challenge to the hegemony of business orientated values. Progressives, who were appalled at the inequalities in America's "culture of abundance", nonetheless upheld the tenets of commercialism in their advocacy of efficiency, standardization, and economic rationalization. The Village rebels, however, distrusted such organizational or rational solutions for society's ills. They pointed out that the reformer's quest for social harmony placed limits on individuality and self-expression by upholding conformity — the ultimate denigrator of culture. Hence the rebels invested heavily in the one social role — the artist — which they believed had the most potential for political efficacy. As Floyd Dell, the co-editor of The Masses, commented, "I am not ashamed to say that to me Art is more important than the destinies of nations, and the artist a more exalted figure than the prophet."[27]

The formation of this lyrical left occurred at the height of the Progressive era as a reaction against both doctrinaire socialism and moderate reformism. Looking back on their activities of the 1910s, many of the Village's key personalities would pinpoint the years 1912-13 as a seminal juncture in their search for self-definition. Mable Dodge — whose salon, conducted at her Fifth Avenue apartment, epitomized the period's range of dissident views — noted:

> Looking back on it now, it seems as though everywhere, in that year of 1913, barriers went down and people reached each other who had never been in touch before; there were all sorts of new ways to communicate as well as new communications. The new spirit was abroad and swept us all together.[28]

Floyd Dell provided a similar account:

> The year 1912 was really an extraordinary year in America as well as in Europe. It was the year of the election of Wilson, a symptom of immense political discontent. It was a year of intense woman suffrage activity. In the arts it marked a new era. Color was everywhere — even in neckties. ...One could go on with the evidence of a New Spirit suddenly come to birth in America.[29]

The editor of The Masses, Max Eastman, was more succinct:

> There was a sense of universal revolt and regeneration, of the just-before-dawn of a new day in American art and literature and living-of-life as well as in politics.[30]

The presidential campaign of 1912 had served to bring pressing social and economic matters to center stage. Real political and cultural change seemed imminent. The sense of shared community, the emergence of "new" communications, and an affinity with European cultural developments expressed in the recollections of Dodge, Dell, and Eastman are significant. They indicate something of the political momentum that facilitated the new intellectuals' reassessment and redefinition of left-wing ideology. However, the Little Renaissance, as it is called, cannot be characterized according to a single viewpoint. Leslie Fishbein has demonstrated that it was fraught with contradictions and suffered from the lack of a specific political agenda.[31] Nonetheless, as Henry May has argued, important shifts in the conceptual language of cultural critique occurred at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century.[32] Alterations to the discourse of social criticism resulted in a concomitant investment in new images to symbolize the radicals' attempts at forging a new identity for themselves and for their cause.

Representations of women were especially important to the Village radicals. In both written and visual forms the female figure proved an accessible and flexible signifier of revolutionary ideals. In part this tendency is related to a long history of symbolizing political content through female imagery. In her discussion of the allegory of the female form, Marina Warner ascribes woman's state of "Otherness" as a crucial factor in her appropriation by revolutionary sects. Associations with primal instincts, outsiderdom, and carnality allowed images of women to embody a *male* defined break from conventions. Yet woman's position as Other meant that the revolutionary ideals mapped on her body would be constantly be negotiated and defined by men, the bearers of reason and civilization. She elaborates:

> From the Amazon to Marianne, the female body's bounty and its ardour...has been seen to possess the energy a society requires for that utopian condition, lawful liberation. But it has done so only by recapitulating the ancient and damaging equivalences between male and culture, female and nature. Otherness is a source of potential and power, but it cannot occupy the centre.[33]

Recent studies in feminist art history suggest that representations of masculinity and femininity are inherently signifiers of power relationships. Gender categories, which are historically and discursively constructed, operate as a site for the production of class and national identities. They may also mask or clarify dominant and dissident ideologies.[34]

The frequency in which female imagery appears in socialist iconography would seem to underline the power of representations of women to define inequalities of class and economic disparities. For instance, an early Masses' illustration of a Happy Home [Fig. 3] plays on the bourgeois notion of the sanctity of the domestic sphere and women's domestic roles. A destitute woman is forced to leave — perhaps to work or to beg — her thin, unhealthy-looking children in the care of the oldest child. The home itself is filthy and literally in shambles. The text, written in biting sarcasm by the poet, Louis Untermeyer, essentially claims middle-class definitions of the home as the fundamental social unit for socialism. It is implied that the woman's economic status is personified in the sorry conditions of her home and children. Allusions to eugenics in the text further the links to middle-class concerns.[35] In other words, the socialist content is signified only through a negotiation of middle-class ideas about respectable femininity and the domestic sphere. Yet there is no interrogation of this domestic ideology. In implying that socialism cannot wreck what capitalism has already destroyed, the sanctity of the domestic sphere is upheld. A hidden subtext submerged in accompanying text and the disgraceful state of the household suggests that socialism would return the woman to her children, thereby reinstating a more "normal" or "natural" relationship. The issue of women's labor in itself was viewed as a corollary of capitalist injustices. The potential of Labor to aid the socialist cause was more effectively expressed through masculine symbolism, since paid work was regarded as the "natural" domain of men. Paradoxically, images of women intended to further the socialist cause worked most effectively when they adhered to the visual codes prescribed by bourgeois standards of morality and social conduct.

The Greenwich Village radicals used representations of women as a means of questioning and subverting those middle-class conventions so deeply ingrained in the Happy Home drawing. As Mari Jo Bohle has observed, "In its prose and visual representations the Masses made woman and her liberation a major subject. ...Woman's situation became for these writers and artists a way of knowing and believing, a touchstone for revolution."[36] Perhaps because they recognized the political efficacy of the female figure, the editors of The Masses invested in images of women to signify their re-working of left-wing ideology. Although aspects of standardized iconography remained, depictions of women were employed after 1913 to convey (male defined) notions of freedom and personal liberty as they were theorized by the new intellectuals. Significantly, female sexuality was viewed as a liberating force and a sign of political resistance. In essence, the whole construction of the politically-engaged Bohemian was mediated through the female body.

The Masses challenged middle-class Puritanism and the tenets of the genteel tradition. Social and sexual forms of repression were frequently targeted for attack. The magazine's personalities believed bourgeois morality inhibited individuality and personal freedom on the same scale as political and economic constraints. These interests are an important factor in understanding The Masses' investment in feminism. Not only did the publication call for woman suffrage and equality for women in the economic sphere, it also endorsed such radical concepts as sexual emancipation. Aside from its Bohemian shock value, this stance indicates The Masses' attempts at broadening "women's issues" beyond the political and economic arenas.

The magazine's involvement in women's fight for the ballot is the focus of Section II of this study. However, to understand the differences between The Masses' definitions of women's issues with their mainstream counterparts, it is necessary to briefly sketch the lyrical left's stance on woman suffrage.

Although the socialist movement included many suffragists, the official party view was extremely cautious on the matter of women's political emancipation. Party members found the suffrage issue difficult to isolate in specifically socialist terms. Many saw the woman question as a fundamentally bourgeois concern; for instance, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) was largely composed of middle-class reformers. It was assumed that middle-class women would vote in the same way as middle-class men, further crystalizing class and economic inequalities. Many socialists were uncomfortable with the fact that the drive for female enfranchisement diverted attention away from class to gender issues. This feeling is aptly summarized in a jingle penned by the prominent suffragist, Charlotte Perkins Gilman:

> Said the Socialist to the Suffragist:
> "My cause is greater than yours!
> You only work for a Special Class,
> We for the gain of the General Mass,
> Which every good ensures!"[37]

Furthermore, socialists desperately wanted to be viewed as defenders of family-orientated values. Sensitive to charges of immorality, they were hesitant to adopt any position that could be interpreted as impugning pure womanhood. Despite the large contingent of feminists within its ranks, the Socialist Party of America did not extend official support for woman suffrage until 1915. In the meantime, socialist suffragists had learned to work with more mainstream organizations, introducing labor and class issues to the suffrage lexicon.

The editors of The Masses abhorred the party's ambivalent and imprecise position towards woman suffrage. Challenging the Victorian attitudes of party stalwarts, Eastman argued:

> The question of sex equality, the economic, social, political independence of women stands by itself, parallel and equal in importance to any other question of the day. The awakening and liberation of women is a revolution in the very process of life. It is not an event in any class or issue between classes. It is an issue for all humanity. It is not an event in history. It is an event in biology.[38]

Women's drive for equality was viewed as symbolic of the entire revolutionary process. Because they often celebrated rebellion and critique for its own sake, the journal's editors were energized, without openly advocating the "direct action" strategies espoused by the Wobblies, anarchists, syndicalists and militant suffragists. The sabotage tactics of the British Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), which were widely condemned in America, captured the imagination of the Village radicals. Randolph Bourne, a prominent Village intellectual, considered the WSPU to be "tremendously thrilling", the "only live thing" in England.[39] Situating the suffragettes' motives within an American framework, Walter Lippmann compared the British saboteurs to the perpetrators of the Boston Tea Party.[40] Similarly, Eastman declared, "I would like to point out to some of our horrified sisters and brothers that we were fairly well united on militant tactics ourselves the last time we were up against the British Cabinet." In reality, he continued, the militant suffragettes proved disturbing to "the self-righteous preachers of conventional morality" because "unladylike conduct" offended Puritan sensibilities.[41] This tendency to characterize the woman's movement as symbolic of a romantic struggle for freedom removed the woman question from political realities to an almost mystical plane. Although the editors of The Masses were committed to feminist objectives, they were drawn in by the sheer excitement of what they perceived as a fundamental cultural change. For example, in 1910 Eastman described suffragists as removed from staid, middle-class reformers because they were "people that want to live."[42] Since suffrage advocates were forced to confront the government and traditional middle-class conceptions of women's proper conduct, Eastman regarded the woman's movement as "the big fight for freedom in my time."[43]

The symbolic resonance of woman's position was always present in American society, but was particularly pronounced during the Progressive era (as recalled in the previous discussion of Crane's imagery). The status of women, who were traditionally viewed as guardians of morality or the cornerstone of social stability, was evoked by liberals and conservatives alike as a measure of the state of society. Various political and special interest groups (the prohibitionists, for instance) laid claim to an archetypical construct of pure womanhood. Even leaders in the woman's movement justified their campaign for the vote by virtue of women's "natural" moral superiority over men; the message being that women could clean up the mess of male-dominated government.[44] Furthermore, women spearheaded crusades against vice, prostitution, and alcohol. The rationale behind these activities was that women had to do everything within their power to protect their homes and children, and save men from themselves. Thus concepts of femininity as a regenerative and moral force were part of ideologies encompassing the entire political spectrum and all segments of society. Certainly such campaigns directed against vice would have contributed to conservative socialists' investment in Crane's images of allegorical figures of moral redemption. Moreover, because the concern to eradicate the more unsavory aspects of U.S. society was so pervasive, Crane's pictures of, say, seasonal goddesses had the additional benefit of appealing to mainstream interests.

Idealizing the woman's movement as a source of greater cultural renewal, The Masses did little to demystify these prevailing notions. It recognized that nineteenth century definitions of femininity were shifting. Hence woman's position was transcribed as tangible evidence that concepts of personal liberty and freedom could be reformulated, fought for and won. Eastman would later reflect "the guiding ideal of the magazine was that every individual should be free to live and grow in his chosen way."[45] The suffrage movement embodied the editor's romantic yearnings to break free of bourgeois morals and manners. "We thought [feminists] would be content with the joy of struggle," noted Floyd Dell, with some irony, "But they needed the joy of achievement."[46] By insisting that the drive for female enfranchisement contained the very seeds of revolutionary vitality, The Masses reaffirmed woman's status as Other: an inspiration or muse for social and political struggle. One Masses contributor stated bluntly, "Women have always been stronger in sympathy, endurance, sentiment, martyrdom, and sheer courage."[47]

Like mainstream feminists who argued that women were better equipped to provide protection from social ills, The Masses emphasized woman's "natural" ability to nurture. Many of The Masses editors believed that woman's liberation would fulfil an unrealized potential for personal growth for both sexes. The quality of life would be, therefore, improved for women and *men*. "Feminism," reasoned Dell, "is going to make it possible for the first time for men to be free."[48] The magazine's concern for feminism was similar to its investment in socialism. It was believed both shared the same fight for equality and freedom. Attaining a society based on socialist ideals was not possible if women were restricted to their traditional unequal roles and conversely, women never could be liberated within the confines of a capitalist structure. One was not possible without the other. Woman's social, political, and economic emancipation was essentially defined according to the impact it would have for men.

To truly be free, women had to first transcend middle-class conventions of marriage and motherhood. To the horror of veteran socialists, The Masses advocated free-love and legal, accessible birth control. (These were hardly notions that the conservatives within the movement wanted associated with socialism. The idea of sexual indecency would have been alien to Crane's representations of pure womanhood.) The rebels of Greenwich Village were intrigued by the social function of sex. Seeking to define sexual matters as a crucial component of revolutionary politics, the New Intellectuals became ardent supporters of the New Morality. Freudian psychosexual theory (Freud had visited the U. S. in 1909) was the topic of heated debates at many Village cafes, to the point that one "could not go out to buy a bun without hearing of someone's complex."[49] The writings of Havelock Ellis, William Morris, and Edward Carpenter provided the Village radicals with an impetus to discuss the interrelations between sexual questions and radical politics.[50]

Greenwich Village's feminist community, which included Ida Rauh, Crystal Eastman (Max Eastman was the former's first husband and the latter's brother), Henrietta Rodman, and Susan Glaspell, were engaged in feminist issues left untouched by the mainstream movement. For example,they attacked the double-standard of female versus male sexual conduct. To give women the same opportunities for professional careers accorded men, they argued for voluntary motherhood and the implementation of family limitation programs. Moreover, birth control would allow women to enjoy sexual activity without fear of pregnancy. This contention that female sexuality was legitimate and healthy was part of a broader strategy of Village feminists to challenge prevailing stereotypes of women's proper sexual and social roles. The insular atmosphere of the Village facilitated these women's experiments with radical lifestyles. Marginalized as "mere Bohemians", they were provided with an "enabling space" from which they could launch their cultural critiques. Village feminists actively pursued careers outside the home, kept their maiden names after marriage and endorsed the idea that unmarried couples could share living quarters. They adopted unconventional dress (sandals and tunics), cropped their hair, smoked cigarettes, frequented pubs and some carried on bisexual and homosexual affairs.[51]

Concerns about family limitation and its corollary, female sexuality, were widespread during the Progressive era. Ranging in emphasis from Neo-Malthusian arguments to reactionary fears of "race suicide", the issue of birth control carried tremendous political currency. Yet The Masses often tied the controversy to its general concern for free expression. For instance, after Margaret Sanger's journal, Woman Rebel — a forum for contraceptive information — was confiscated in 1914 by the U. S. Post Office, and Sanger was indicted for circulating "obscene material", The Masses rallied to her defence. When her husband, William, was also charged in 1915 (Sanger had left the country and it was believed the authorities were pressured to find a scapegoat), the magazine framed the issue as one of freedom of speech. Eastman ascribed the suppression of birth control information to the overall repressive impulses of the bourgeoisie. To aid the Sangers and the cause of individual freedom "will require the public support of all men and women who believe either in the truth, or in constitutional liberty."[52] Eastman beseeched readers to not so much *support* the birth control campaign as to *condemn* the "Puritans" who threatened the free flow of information. In defining the controversy in these terms, The Masses may have wished to evoke support from the more conservative elements of its audience. Regardless of its overall motives, the contraception issue was framed in such a way by the magazine so as to minimize women's stake in the whole birth control movement.[53]

In spite of the editors' close associations with Village feminists, few women were directly involved in the management of The Masses. As a result, its feminism often reflected male solipsism. Leslie Fishbein has observed that these men "failed to comprehend that liberated women might not view birth control and free-love arrangements merely as a means of freeing male rebels from the constraints of the bourgeois family."[54] Furthermore, the publication's male editors tended to position themselves as benevolent patrons of feminism. In the course of condemning anti-suffrage literature, Floyd Dell announced, "I never failed to regard woman...as a person, a fellow human being."[55] Similarly, Eastman commented "that by giving to women a higher place in our social esteem, it will promote their universal development."[56] Although the women's movement had tremendous symbolic value for the male editors of The Masses, they nonetheless relegated women to a passive role in the desired cultural transformation. In essence, they were regarded as revolutionary support staff.

Representations of women published in The Masses, therefore, worked on a multiplicity of levels. The magazine's editors made the definition of femininity (respectable and deviant) into a revolutionary process. They recognized that class and political values could be staked on the female form; they knew that the category of woman could be mobilized as a flexible weapon to strike at the hearts of the "Puritan bourgeoisie". The Masses claimed woman's position as a point of identification and differentiation from not only orthodox socialists, but other political forces as well. However, the role that visual culture played in this signification is as complicated and contradictory as the "bizarre amalgam of belief" that comprised the journal's editorial stance.[57] How successfully could The Masses' images of women convey revolutionary ideals when the very coherence of these representations depended on a set of visual codes associated with bourgeois culture? If female sexuality was sublimated into a cipher of male-defined freedom and liberty, could a particularly feminist or socialist content be read into such images?

THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF REALISM AND THE CRAYON SKETCH

Two important factors govern the interpretation of The Masses' depictions of women. The first is obvious: the pictures appeared in a socialist, Bohemian context. The second was the magazine's predilection — after 1912 — for the realist style associated with the Ashcan school of artists. It would be a mistake to assume that realism offers a mimetic, descriptive account of everyday actualities. Realist representation is a complex process in which certain images are accepted as more concrete and plausible than others. Yet during the 1910s, realism carried tremendous symbolic value for critics who felt it was particularly appropriate for political and nationalistic reasons. For example, in his review of the Exhibition of Independent Artists, Robert Henri, leader of the American realists, equated the style with national vitality:

> As I see it, there is only one reason for the development of art in America, and that is that the people of America learn the means of expressing themselves in their own time and in their own land. ...What we...need is art that expresses the *spirit* of the people today. ...If art is real it must come to affect every action in our lives, every product, every necessary thing. It is, in fact, the understanding of what is needed in life, and then the pursuit of the best means to produce it. It is...inventing something that is absolutely necessary for the progress of our existence. ...Art cannot be separated from life. It is the expression of the greatest need of which life is capable, and we value art not because of the skilled product, but because of its revelation of a life's experience. The artists who produce the most satisfactory art are those who are absorbed in the civilization in which they are living.[58]

Another critic characterized dominant styles (academic and Impressionist) of American art as "disingenuous", where artists "disguise our race and personality" by using European models that "[never] will have the slightest relation to our own way of thinking or living."[59] She continues by stating that artists must "put upon canvas conditions that have developed him into the racial type he is, and in the doing he expresses his own point of view about the conditions."[60]

Frustrated with the exhibiting policies of the National Academy of Design, Henri had organized an exhibition of "The Eight" in 1908 to showcase the realist art abhorred by academicians. Stressing the qualities of individuality and liberty, Henri framed the new art as a genuinely American expression. Subscribing to the Whitmanesque view that American democracy was produced and fortified in the everyday activity of ordinary people, he reasoned "A man must...express the utmost possibilities of his nation through his own individuality." He further politicized the style of realism by emphasizing its non-institutional, and hence, class conditions. "Art does not respond to the whim of the millionaire who would create art galleries as he does libraries," Henri argued, "Art is too emotional to respond to coercion or discipline; and it cannot successfully become a whim of the rich, even in America."[61] A rhetoric of manliness was also attached to Henri's notions of national art. For example, the artist,Guy Pène du Bois, equated realism with masculinity: "An artist must be a man first. He must stand on his own feet, see with his own eyes, the brave eyes of bold manhood, and report his findings in the straightforward unfinicky manner of the male."[62] This language permeated the critical discourse surrounding American realism. For instance, a reviewer praised John Sloan's work for depicting "the subjects that are commonest and nearest at hand and [limning] them forth with the strong, sure strokes of a man who sees life with clear eyes and knows how to interpret that which he sees."[63] The art critic for Coming Nation, a socialist publication, noted Sloan's "broadly democratic..bold, obvious, direct" style and commented that it was little wonder that his graphic art was "so virile and strong." "Sloan has fought valiantly for Socialism with his tongue," the critic concluded. ..."But the best of his socialism is in his art."[64] Because the work of the American realists challenged the tenets of the academy and lent itself to a critical vocabulary grounded in the language of rebellion and nationalism, they were known in some circles as the "Revolutionary Gang".

The majority of The Masses' realist drawings assumed political connotations by virtue of the political significations already imbedded in American Realism and its attendant critical vocabulary. Viewed by many artists and critics as a site in which nationalist goals could be rejuvenated, or the voice of rebellion so obviously visualized, the style was easily translated into the Greenwich Village radicals' brand of socialism. Pictures drawn by Sloan, George Bellows and Stuart Davis stood in marked contrast to the academic renderings found in the early Masses. Rebecca Zurier characterizes this artistic shift as the difference between a political versus a direct action agenda. She explains that the conventional art forms found in The Masses of 1911-1912 are essentially reform-minded; while in Sloan and Eastman's Masses the illustrations are more confrontational and provocative. She elaborates: "Satire attacks. The propagandist hopes to persuade; the satirist attempts to subvert."[65] Zurier's need to secure The Masses' post 1913 graphics as "art" versus "propaganda" obfuscates the function and ideological underpinnings of both types of imagery. However, her observation is useful because it underlines the noticeable shift in signifying political content that differentiates the earlier version of the magazine with the later issues. The original Masses relied on an artistic vocabulary that, through its grounding in established iconography and styles, connoted order and resolution. The pictures' meanings were more or less fixed by citing a repertoire of accepted symbols and signs. In the later Masses, viewers were offered no such sense of discipline or convention. Realist sketches facilitated a maneuvering space for multiple and different readings of imagery. The process of interpretation itself reinforced a sense of liberation and vitality already encoded in the everyday subject matter and in the loose, gestural rendering common to these works.

Among Zurier's most compelling arguments is her assertion that autographic crayon or sketch technique "developed into a language associated with social concern."[66] She refers to The Masses' artists' admiration for drawings by Jean-Louis Forain, Théophile Alexandre Steinlen, and the graphics reproduced in L'Assiette au Beurre in general; but especially to their great appreciation of the work of Honoré Daumier. Citing Daumier's gestural emphasis, and the rough, unfinished quality of his drawings she concludes that "medium became the message" since "these drawings would speak more directly than...the detailed paintings reproduced in earlier issues of The Masses...[and] the crayon line took on political significance as a stylistic rebellion against bourgeois illustration."[67] Yet Zurier does not go far enough in her analysis because she fails to locate the implications of sketchiness within the context of contemporary discourse. Precisely how did the gestural sketch convey political significance? What sort of currency did Daumier's work have for Americans during the 1910s?

In his discussion of "sketch discourse", Albert Boime points to the political signification of the technique: "...its very openness and looseness made it inevitable that sketches would participate in the world of social and political conflict. In moments of revolution sketches tend to be perceived, and overperceived, as statements in opposition to the status quo and in defense of change in the social order."[68] Qualities of spontaneity, directness, and incompleteness inherent in the sketch's gestural, open form are ambiguous yet ideologically nuanced enough to enable viewers to interpret sketched images in political terms. For Robert Henri, John Sloan, and their followers, the freedom and individuality conveyed in improvised renderings would nurture a sense of national rejuvenation and facilitate political change. Rejecting ordered, static, explicitly planned forms would free the artist to depict "life in the raw" or what Sloan, in referring to Daumier, termed "the marvel of existence."[69] The refined, dignified subject matter associated with the academies and the bourgeoisie could never be successfully rendered in the crude, rough gestures of the sketch. Thus the technique denoted a resistance to conservative attempts to order and organize certain social and political realities through visual representation. Artists should have the opportunity, Henri wrote, to find "the utmost freedom of expression, a fluid technique which will respond to every inspiration and enthusiasm which thrills him, and without question his art will be characteristically American, whatever the subject."[70] Similarly, Eastman valued the sketch technique for its libertarian properties; for capturing "that free and fluid movement in which the artist himself, as well as his subject, lives."[71]

The Masses claimed that its use of drawings affirmed the democratic principles that, as they perceived it, were under siege by the interests of big business. As John Sloan would state years later: "Through [our] experience as artists, we became defenders of the Bill of Rights on a broader social basis." Graphic art could be easily reproduced and widely distributed; one did not need to frequent a gallery or pay a lot of money to consume this art. "The ideal of democracy," stated Eastman, "has indeed given to many artists of our day a new interest in drawing."[72] The editor, however, did not simply connect drawing with democratic ideals by virtue of its accessibility to larger numbers of viewers. In his view the cause of freedom (presumably from capitalism) also would be served in the actual process of viewing. Graphics that do not rely on proscribed visual codes clear a path for the affirmation of individuality. That is, the deliberate disruption of viewer expectations would facilitate a "democratic" reading. He elaborates:

> ...When artists draw creatively, when they draw with individuality...and with freedom, they are simply coming nearer to that natural act of ours. They are coming nearer to real experience. ...But most magazine illustrators have never caught the fever of individual being. They have never declared themselves free and independent of customary knowledge; they have never gone beyond catering to the rudimentary pleasure of recognition. And in a commercial way, it is well for them. Because if they should put their own individual vision strongly into a picture, a great many people to whom their individuality is uncongenial, would dislike the picture, whereas the *mere act of easy recognition pleases everybody a little*. [Eastman's italics][73]

Some members of The Masses' audience appreciated the "free" quality of these drawings. George Bernard Shaw commented that "the pictures are always firstrate" for "escaping monotony." The realist novelist, Robert Herrick, found merit in "those rude, raw drawings of Mr. Sloan and his friends, so different from the insipidities of all other magazines."[74] One of the many philanthropists who donated funds to the publication specifically cited the artwork as a reason for doing so: "I am not a socialist...and I do not agree with many of the details of The Masses' propaganda. But most of the artwork...is great art."[75] As is discussed shortly, the sketch technique's quality of individualism may have appealed to more conservative, even capitalist, audiences for different reasons. Although he confided to Eastman that he thought The Masses' illustrations were "crude" and "offhand", Norman Hapgood of Harper's adopted a similar approach in his own journal's graphics.[76]

While a few readers appreciated the drawings' "truth and vividness", many complained that "you cannot find inspiration in a sewer" and labeled the pictures "repulsive" and "foul". One member of The Masses' audience asked:

> In the name of all that's unholy where does the art editor get the junk he uses for cover designs and distributes thru the...pages of THE MASSES? ...what in God's name do the illustrations mean? They turn the stomach. ...Meaningless sketches, however, can be endured, but meaningless sketches combined with gruesomeness and repulsiveness insult both the eye and the intelligence and give just cause for protest.[77]

In fact many readers specifically cited the ambiguity of the pictures as cause for concern. "When you have the inclination and the time," inquired one correspondent, "do explain some of the glimmerings of art found in your most interesting magazine. They have 'got' me, so I presume they are above my head — or eye — and I desire to become enlightened."[78] Another letter worried that The Masses "does...more harm than good to the Socialist cause. Each issue of the paper ought to contain a disclaimer absolving the Socialist Party from any responsibility for it...if you really wish to further the cause of socialism... ." The author added, "And say, couldn't you blot out a lot of the blotches which you call illustrations?"[79]

The incompleteness of the graphic sketches seemed to puzzle and infuriate readers used to more conventional illustrations. This expectation of an overt meaning was exacerbated by the socialist context in which the pictures were consumed; readers acted as if they were not satisfied — they needed more clues to extract the desired message. It was The Masses' intelligentsia audience who made positive comments about the graphics' "libertarian" qualities. Generally, the party workers (the journal was distributed through branch offices of the Socialist Party) expressed genuine dismay and bafflement at the drawings' incoherent meanings.

Although Masses' pictures were known to generate controversy, graphic illustration and cartoons — in particular, the crayon technique — were undergoing a revival and positive reassessment during the 1910s. A writer for the New York Evening Post commented that cartoons are "the most interesting manifestations of our art. There is less self-consciousness about it than many other outlets for artistic energy today can show. It has less pose, a characteristic honesty that is above question." Frank Weitenkampf, who published a book on American graphic art, praised Daumier's crayon technique for its "clear, direct, adequate" properties and for avoiding "unnecessary artistic verbiage." Equating the technique with American values of forthrightness, he argued that "the big sweep of the style seems to suggest big ideas;...the unequivocal directness of the style promotes a directness of thought that gets at main principles."[80] Similarly, R. L. Roeder of the Boston Transcript admired Forain for expressing "his idea without a superfluous mark; a few sweeping outlines suggest all that he needs of the figure, the several essential spots complete the study."[81] Another writer noted the American "renaissance" in cartoons and singled out Boardman Robinson, a Masses contributor and newspaper artist, as the successor to Daumier and colleague of Forain.[82] Daumier's work had been well received by Americans since the end of the Civil War and perhaps due to a heightened sense of social consciousness his work was widely acclaimed during the Progressive era.[83]

As radical as some perceived The Masses' graphics to be, they, like much of the magazine's political commentary, were subsumed by broader American ideological constructs. Free, gestural sketches and realist scenes may convey a sense of individuality and improvisation that appears to challenge standardized forms of political illustration. But they also link up with, and hence reinforce, a prevailing concept of a classless society where cherished individualism ensures the health and progress of the nation. The radical edge of these socialist illustrations was blunted by two "American traditions": concern for the common man and woman and a philosophy of dissent through humor and cultural critique. "Humor," wrote Eastman, "has a higher place in America than in other national cultures, and The Masses... was in that respect constitutionally and fervently American."[84] Even Zurier repeats this line in her suggestion that the journal "sought to remind its readers that irreverence was part of popular culture; distrust of the system was as American as the Founding Fathers."[85] In reality, "distrust of the system" could characterize much of the political rhetoric of the Progressive era, when even the mainstream politicians themselves purported to be fighting the establishment. Recalling an evening at her salon when Wobblies, anarchists, and socialists were asked to outline their goals and objectives, Mable Dodge commented, "There was a great deal of General Conversation but no definition."[86] This observation may aptly describe the artistic and political platforms of The Masses. The magazine was forced to carve out a place for its commentary within the competing artistic and political ideologies of the time. Its challenge was to create representations that were meaningful during a period when radical ideas were in perpetual flux.

The magazine's editors latched onto a notion that would be formulated more clearly in the 1930s with the advent of Popular Front politics, and is typified by the slogan, "Socialism as Americanism." This view asserts that the basic tenets of socialism are already present in the ideals of John Lockean liberalism, which were woven into the fabric of the nation at its inception. This makes criticisms of the ideological consensus (or dominant ideology) extremely difficult to present as such. A concern for the the quality of life, egalitarian ideals, and the expression of dissent — arguably the cornerstones of revolutionary ferment — are already inherent in the American tradition. Thus for their socio-political critiques to carry any weight, radical forces must align themselves with the liberal tradition and position themselves as defenders of "American" qualities such as individualism and ingenuity. Their project must be grounded in a reclamation of the democratic principles lost under, say, capitalism and a repressive class system. Although The Masses saw itself as laying siege to all "old systems", it was more precisely working to rejuvenate the quality of American life through an almost Whitmanesque conception of democracy.[87]

Such complexities involved in formulating a vocabulary of dissent must be considered when dealing with The Masses' representations of women. On one hand, the periodical attempted to use female imagery as part of a broader strategy aimed at creating a discourse of cultural critique specific to the lyrical left. The Masses needed to find a way of making its subversive stance meaningful at a time when other radical factions, such as the Wobblies and anarchists, all vied to assume leadership in both the cultural and political vanguard (they were not necessarily seen as separate spheres). This factor may account for the number of pictures depicting "unconventional" females: loosely defined as women who seemed to defy the middle-class norm of wife and mother. By contrast, allegorical figures, as typified by Crane's fruit goddesses, appealed to conservative socialists and reform-orientated progressives (i.e. the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Jane Addams) by evoking a feminine ideal marketable to mainstream groups. Because images of "non-conformist" women appeared to challenge upper and middle-class investment in unambiguous, respectable femininity, they could by extension seem to question bourgeois values in general. Thus The Masses' female imagery operated as a point of identification for the lyrical left, upon which the artists and editors consolidated their revolutionary claims.

However, to be intelligible, these representations had to rely on a repertoire of social types with which audiences would already be familiar. Images of unconventional femininity that did not significantly challenge these types, ran the risk of authorizing those mainstream assumptions on respectable versus deviant womanhood. Moreover, the qualities of non-conformity and individuality ascribed to pictures of, say, the female underclass, upheld a dominant belief that all sectors of American society enjoyed similar freedom and individual liberty. For many mainstream groups, this was a desirable way to account for categories of femininity that stood apart from the middle-class ideal. Liberal observers did not necessarily like such representations but, as evidenced in the commentary on the libertarian crayon technique, they likely found a way to accommodate these "subversive" pictures within their system of values. Such depictions of women appeared to horrify only doctrinaire socialists.

The Masses' images of "unconventional" women are the focus of the following case studies. Here I examine how images of working-class women, "wandering women", African American women, and Isadora Duncan all had essential qualities of

Otherness to signify revolutionary ideals; while simultaneously asserting familiar assumptions about "natural" feminine properties of passivity, intuition, and proper conduct. Furthermore, images of anonymous social types were mobilized to construct a new socialist personality — that of the flâneur. This occurred during a period in the history of U.S. socialism in when the lyrical left had enough maneuvering room to define a new brand of radicalism. By comparison, pictures of Isadora Duncan reveal The Masses' need, following the nation's entry into World War I, to rally around an already established cultural symbol. At this time it could no longer afford the luxury of questioning conventional socialist identities.

FLANEURS AND SOCIALISM: VIEWS OF THE FEMALE UNDERCLASS

The genteel tradition — so despised by the artists and editors of The Masses — was described by Thorstein Veblen in 1899 in a passage which addressed the status of leisure-class women:

> Propriety requires respectable women to abstain more consistently from useful effort and to make more of a show of leisure than the men of the same social classes. It grates painfully on our nerves to contemplate the necessity of any well-bred woman's earning a livelihood by useful work. It is not "women's sphere". Her sphere is within the household, which she should "beautify", and of which she should be the chief ornament.[88]

Here the idle, well-bred woman takes on political significance in demonstrating that wealth and social prestige leads to, in Veblen's estimation, a largely feckless existence. The genteel woman's sphere — one that she defines but which also defines her — signifies artificiality and capriciousness (obviously the middle-class woman's management of her domestic sphere is not considered). Respectable women's domain, the home and family, and its corollary, middle-class propriety, was regarded by the lyrical left, and many others, who challenged the genteel tradition as stifling and suffocating "real"experience and "purposeful" activity. A more authentic existence was to be found in roaming the streets, probing and exploring the recesses of the urban environment. And in this activity the concepts of freedom, personal liberty, and Americanness were explored and redefined. The public sphere embodied the sense of rejuvenation and independence desired by Robert Henri and his followers; but it was a sphere that in its very definition excluded the genteel woman.

As Janet Wolff and Griselda Pollock have observed, this activity is central to the identity of the flâneur, the bourgeois explorer of public life who wanders the city, deriving pleasure from taking in its sights and sounds. "The flâneur symbolizes the privilege or freedom to move about the public arenas of the city observing but never interacting, consuming the sights through a controlling but rarely acknowledged gaze, directed as much at other people as at the goods for sale."[89] Due to the pervasiveness of the ideology of separate spheres, the flâneur type is inherently masculine because the public world is constructed across the axis of the male. The idea of the flâneur is embedded in the writings of Charles Baudelaire, particularly in his Painter of Modern Life of 1859-60. The thrill of urban spectacles and experiences were conveyed to the American Realists through Robert Henri, whose own descriptions of city life bear a remarkable resemblance to Baudelaire's characterizations.[90] Moreover, as previously mentioned, Henri's call for a new spirit in American art was grounded in a masculinist vocabulary. A genuinely national art, Henri argued, would not be possible unless "the men who become the artists must feel within themselves the need of expressing the virile ideas of their country. ...And thus art will grow as individual men develop, and become great as our own men learn to think fearlessly, express powerfully and put into their work all the strength of body and soul."[91] In the act of observing, of mingling among the masses, individuality, freedom, even democracy could be revitalized in artistic form. Yet because this process took place in the public sphere it could only be understood in a male vocabulary.

From 1906 to 1913, John Sloan kept a diary where he recorded, among other things, his explorations of lower Manhattan.[92] He made numerous references to scenes of working class life. He commented on January 16, 1908, that he was "Thinking how necessary it is for an artist of any creative sort to go among common people — not waste his time among his fellows, for it must be from the other class — not creators, nor Bohemians nor dilettantes that he will get his knowledge of life." Interestingly, creativity is seen to stem from the experience of Otherness, a different class in this instance, which Sloan credits with a more authentic existence. He would later state that "I never felt the desire to mingle with the people I painted, but observed life as a spectator rather than participant. ...I saw people living in the streets and on rooftops of the city: and I liked their fine human animal spirits."[93] Sloan, a dedicated socialist, nonetheless positioned himself as a cross-class tourist. The urban underclass were defined as less inhibited, more sensuous, and more carefree than their bourgeois counterparts. Although the artist viewed these qualities as ideals from which the middle class had much to learn, he reiterated an attitude held by many in the upper strata of society. For example, Progressive era arguments about the need to regulate working class behavior, and especially their perceived promiscuity, were grounded in similar perspectives.

Sloan often noted observations of working-class women in his diary. He would frequently watch them at their moments of leisure. With regard to this activity Patricia Hills has argued that "Sloan's delight in women stems from his belief, perhaps even envy that they represent pure, simple, innocent spontaneity — spontaneity often ruined by the deleterious effects of living in a competitive, industrialized, and exploitative society."[94] While Hills' interpretation of Sloan's investment in images of women rather uncritically accepts his claims, it is an accurate assessment of the artist's attitude. However, this view defines women according to a timeless ideal and stresses that women offer men, through their pure "nature", a chance of redemption. Yet the frank depiction of a working-class woman's private life proved disturbing for some of Sloan's bourgeois contemporaries. One reviewer, after viewing the artist's painting of a tenement woman preparing for bed, found the subject distasteful:

> "The Cot"...provides a not very alluring glimpse into the private life of a lady not disconcertingly beautiful, who is in the act of retiring for the night. One is curious as to the theories of art which lie behind the execution of these pictures.... .[95]

The writer implicitly suggests that notions of respectable femininity could not be conveyed in such a scene. Essentially, representations of working-class women offered spectators no middle ground. Middle-class reformers and orthodox socialists, viewed such images suspiciously. Fears about eugenics and "excessive" working-class sexuality led these groups to view these woman as disruptive forces to be rehabilitated. Socialists, however, differed from their more mainstream counterparts by ascribing the social ostracism of lower-class females not to "weak character" but to the economic disparities of the capitalist system. As will be explored below, The Bachelor Girl [Fig. 2] does not signify explicitly the notion of a social victim. Seen as exotically sensuous and closer to nature by many of the Greenwich Village radicals, encounters with working-class women could define the liberation they sought. Accordingly, the Bohemian persona merged with that of lower-class females, even though the latter's defiance of middle-class propriety was essentially an invention of the former. Thus a construct of the universal feminine would be upheld in an only slightly altered context.

Zurier argues that Sloan's Bachelor Girl is radical insofar as it goes against type. Its political significance derives from the treatment of a working-class woman as an individual. For Zurier, the bachelor girl is not a reductive sign of class inequality but rather a psychologically complex personality.[96] However, the author does not analyze the significance of the woman's accoutrements or possible meanings the scene as a whole might have had for The Masses' audience. Nor does she account for the ways this female figure operates, despite her particularized appearance, as a type.

Concern for the home environment of the working class was widespread during the Progressive era. Social values and moral strength were thought to be conditioned by the state of one's household. As a measure of respectable versus deviant femininity the domestic sphere was of inestimable importance. Sloan's drawing carefully alludes to the bachelor girl's existence beyond her meager apartment; she is seen to be leading a fruitful existence without being dependent on a male. However, to emphasize that this woman's independence is respectable (i.e. she is not a prostitute or otherwise immoral) the artist renders her room according to certain standards that signified a "proper" lifestyle. The apartment is clean and uncluttered; the bed is made, the coat is neatly folded and the hat boxes are carefully placed in the closet. Sanitary conditions are further stressed with the prominent pitcher and water basin in the foreground. Although the unelaborate room identifies the bachelor girl's economic status, it also may stress her respectability because simple furnishings were widely perceived by the middle-class as more dignified and an appropriate countermeasure to chaotic living.[97] Furthermore, unadorned surroundings were thought to be an inherent part of "American" aesthetic taste, where directness and clarity were valued above fussy, superfluous details. (This is an important consideration given the predominance of immigrants among the urban working class). Material goods are downplayed; only the woman's dress is given a prominent place in the picture. Yet, in this instance, the garment works to reinforce the bachelor girl's respectability. It is white and clean, and moderate; it lacks any hint of flamboyance and showiness. In fact, the only unaustere item in the apartment is the large, feathered hat placed on the bed.[98]

Clearly, this picture is codified to convey an image of respectable, pure womanhood. Although Zurier is correct in her assertion that the woman is treated as a multifaceted individual, this factor does not mitigate the bachelor girl's function as a political symbol. Zurier tends to assume that symbols operate on a one dimensional, homogeneous level, when, in fact, they may work on a multiplicity of levels. The essential items that articulate the bachelor girl's "more authentic" existence belong to the domestic sphere and hence reinforce a notion that women are defined according to the households that they keep. Gazing at her dress, the woman may be regarded as engaging in frivolous, inconsequential thought. Women dreamily looking at dresses is frequently found in Victorian narratives or in ninteenth century *genre* paintings. This device suggests that the bachelor girl may be actually fantasizing about attracting a man. She certainly is thereby removed from the sphere of politics and even labor; her world is twice removed from public concerns for she is not only depicted within her home but she is lost in thought — unaware that she is being observed. This posture renders her passive and unthreatening; her life is a far cry from the social and political upheavals being instigated by militant female strikers and suffragists. For these reasons The Bachelor Girl, though highly particularized, adheres to conventional stories and types of women found in more traditional representations of women. Moreover, a subtext suggesting the gaze of the flâneur is suggested by the woman's partial state of undress. Undoubtedly a portrayal of working-class males would not have been rendered in this way. Because men of this class were usually shown in public settings, engaged in labor or a similar activity (such as strike agitation), it would have seemed ridiculous to depict such a figure lingering over a garment, half-dressed, and confined to a small apartment. The male sphere is one of action and power to exact change; no such elements exist in The Bachelor Girl.

When examined in the context of early 1915, the picture takes on additional nuances. Until the second decade of the twentieth century, women's situation was defined by various political groups according to economic circumstances and the drive for female enfranchisement. The term "feminism" only gained currency around the time of the presidential election campaign of 1912. American feminism addressed broader cultural issues and attitudes instead of the specific questions of female sexual and economic exploitation, which had characterized the woman's movement since the nineteenth century. But feminism seemed to many an imprecise concept with no clear objectives. The idea of questioning the underpinnings of patriarchal society was regarded as peculiar. Even those on the vanguard of the woman's movement had difficulty defining feminism. Articles explaining the new "ism" proliferated in the mainstream press where feminism was often treated as a curiosity akin to cubism and futurism.[99]

As various factions battled in the 1910s to claim and define the terms of feminism, the discussion became increasingly centered in Greenwich Village. (In the popular imagination the Bohemians constituted a "strange field of feminism, futurism, and free verse."[100]) The debate quickly evolved into an analysis of femininity itself. Emma Goldman, a prominent anarchist, renounced the middle-class woman's claims of moral superiority, stating "In her exalted conceit she does not see how truly enslaved she is, not so much by man, as by her own silly notions and traditions."[101] Goldman's feminist views broke radically from the mainstream movement and its Greenwich Village counterparts. She argued:

> [Woman] can give suffrage or the ballot no new quality, nor can she receive anything from it that will enhance her own quality. Her development, her freedom, her independence must come from and through herself. First, by asserting herself as a personality, and not as a sex commodity. Second, by refusing the right to anyone over her body; by refusing to bear children, unless she wants them; by refusing to be a servant to God, the State, society, the husband, the family, etc., by making her life simpler, but deep and richer. ...only that, and not the ballot, will set woman free, will make her a force hitherto unknown in the world, a force for real love, for peace, for harmony; a force of divine fire, of life-giving; a creator of free men and women.[102]

Most Greenwich Village radicals, however, continued to define femininity according to female nature. A paradigm that equated feminism with feminine passion and intuition was espoused in the pages of The Masses. It was believed that the unleashed power of woman, pent up under centuries of male domination, would be so strong it would engender a cultural tidal wave of revolutionary proportions. As if to reinforce the pervasive belief that women were governed by their innate feminine nature, Dell stated in 1913 that "it is to the body that one looks for the Magna Charta of feminism."[103] Wild and unrestrained, woman became an agent of cultural transformation, but it was a revolution that essentially upheld her status as Other. Released femininity was exotic and titillating to the Village rebels, precisely because it was so *different* from the norms of respectable womanhood. The grain of truth underlying this romantic vision was that feminist gains made during the 1910s did promise fundamental cultural shifts. What was not known, however, was where greater female participation in society would lead. Thus in the imaginations of these male feminists, woman's situation took on near mythical proportions.

Sloan's bachelor girl's femininity is defined through her unmarried status. Although poor, she is respectable; her freedom is not meant to be viewed suspiciously. Confined to her meager apartment (signifying her class), the woman's potential to enact significant cultural change is held in check. Yet as the accoutrements of the outside would suggest, a potential for real liberation — for the woman and the whole working class — does exist. Moreover, in the early months of 1915, the socialist community was mobilizing en masse for the upcoming November suffrage referendum. (This is discussed greater detail in Section II.) Feminist organizations had prepared long and hard for the campaign since 1913, and suffragists were extremely optimistic at their chances of a "yes" vote. Meta Stern, who kept socialists informed about the effort in her column at the New York Call, announced that John Sloan had executed a suffrage stamp to help in the cause. She praised it for contributing to the "perfect cooperation of men and women in the Socialist movement."[104] News of Sloan's contribution (or perhaps his intended contribution) to the campaign and the The Bachelor Girl both appeared in February, 1915. Whether or not Sloan intended the drawing to contribute to feminist mobilization, simply by virtue of its presence in a socialist publication sympathetic to the cause, it is likely that some viewers would have read it this way.

Floyd Dell also adopted the flâneur's perspective in his description of a Hoboken burlesque show. This experience would have been taboo for most women — at least if they wished to maintain a virtuous reputation. Dell's encounter with an exotic, unsavory subculture is therefore constructed across the axis of masculinity. He characterized the star female performer as a truly emancipated woman. Free from middle-class conventions, Dell interpreted her sexual display as an embodiment of female power. Paradoxically, he felt this power worked to de-sexualize her:

> Her soul is adventurous, like her legs; she kicks open the zenith with her boisterous boyish laugh. She defies the code of the dream-world in which women burn with the ready fires of miscellaneous invitation; she is remote, unseizable, bewitchingly unsexed, cold as the fire-balls that dance in the Artic rigging. She mocks at desire as she mocks at the law of gravitation; she is beyond sex. Nor is she mere muscle and grace. She has, shining in contrast to this impersonal world of sex, a hint of personality, a will of her own, and existence independent of the audience.[105]

Dell's illicit encounter with the seedy world of the "burlesquerie" is a combination of class voyeurism and sexual tourism. A woman of this class and profession would have been regarded as deviant in terms of middle-class norms. "Beyond sex" in a sexually charged environment, Dell perceived the performer as having the power of self determination. Yet she remains the covetous object of the male gaze, enticing male viewers with "remote, unseizable" sexuality. She inhabits the strange, exotic world of the Other and is only "powerful" in possessing what men desire. Dell did not seem to realize the ironic contradictions between the "liberated" sexuality he ascribed to her and the larger implications of positioning women as objects of display.

The gaze of the flâneur also becomes apparent in the subjects favored by Stuart Davis. In particular, Davis was fascinated by African American culture and would frequent black neighborhoods and saloons. At this time Davis developed his well-known interest in jazz: "I [was] particularly hep to the jive, for that period, and spent much time listening to the Negro piano players in Newark dives"[106] Although jazz music would later be celebrated as a quintessentially American art form, during the 1910s it was too closely associated with blacks to be considered respectable . Davis' crayon study of an African American woman, entitled, Jersey City Portrait [Fig. 4] after the scene's Newark location, was published in the summer of 1915. The woman dominates the foreground, clearly posing for the artist, her feet resting on a chair. The figures in the background are dancing, smoking, and drinking. Although Zurier points out that Davis failed to interrogate stereotypical images of African Americans, she views this drawing as exceptional for conveying a sense of "inner life".[107] Given the proliferation of racist representations of blacks found at this time, it is possible that a depiction which did not rely on stock racial characters may have been interpreted by the Village radicals as empowering for African Americans. However, the picture's essential premise is based on the experience of Other culture. Here, gender, class, and race are woven together to create a problematic cultural symbol.

During the 1910s, knowledge of African American culture was constructed in a wide range of discourses. Viewed as inherently more "primitive" than whites, blacks were characterized as more sexually promiscuous, more devoted to leisurely pursuits, and hence more readily enticed, like impressionable children, to sinful activity. In the minds of the white middle class, African Americans were the living embodiments of difference. In fact, the possible emancipation of Black America was regarded as so dangerous that even "progressive" feminists and the Socialist Party distanced themselves from the black movement.[108] Although the Village radicals viewed African Americans as living embodiments of freedom from middle-class propriety, they were less interested in blacks' unequal position in society, than in their "naturally" primitive existence. Such an attitude not only upheld prevailing stereotypes, it also assumed that black people would be excluded from the desired cultural transformation. As Fishbein, in her discussion of the "exotic other", explains: "Villagers envied the paganism of blacks, believed them to be free of the puritanical repression that plagued whites. Hence for them blacks had to remain exotic and uncivilized, untouched by the modern world."[109]

Only two months before Davis's illustration was published, The Masses addressed itself to the charges that the periodical was perpetuating race inequalities. "Your pictures of colored people," wrote one correspondent, "would...depress the Negroes themselves and confirm the whites in their contemptuous and scornful attitude." Eastman replied that "Stuart Davis portrays the colored people he sees with exactly the same cruelty of truth, with which he portrays the whites." However, he acknowledged that the issue was problematic, noting "that because the colored people are an oppressed minority, a special care ought to be taken not to publish *anything* which their race-sensitiveness, or the race arrogance of the whites, would misinterpret."[110]

However, even if Jersey City Portrait does not rely on well-worn black stereotypes, it tends to reinforce a patronizing conception of African American culture. In white middle-class society, respectable women did not congregate in saloons. Davis' female figure is relaxed and at home in this setting, as if it is her natural place. Viewers may have accepted this as the normal situation of a lower-class black female. Had Sloan placed the bachelor girl in a similar environment, doubts would have been immediately raised about the questionable nature of her virtue. In Davis' picture the woman is part of the "natural order"; in a "primitive, uncivilized" culture, women, or so it was thought, were uninhibited and liberated. Because Davis' female figure dominates the entire room in addition to the foreground, the scene is mediated and hence presented to the viewer from her perspective. The slight tilting of perspective and odd cropping of figures, pictorial devices borrowed from Henri Toulouse Lautrec, physically fuse the woman with her setting and help construct the viewer into the picture. The sensual, sinful activities taking place behind her underline her exoticness and possible sexual allure. She is Other in every respect: class, race, gender, and culture. At the same time the

African American women is comfortable in her sphere. She leans back in her chair, relaxed and at home in this unsavory environment. There is no danger that she will venture from her assigned social status.

It should be emphasized that the voyeurism of the flâneur is constructed as masculine. There is no flâneuse (technically the word does not even exist). Exhilarating forays into the urban netherworld were sanctioned for men but not for women, if they wished to remain respectable. In some respects The Masses catered to such voyeurism by publishing numerous articles, stories, and illustrations dealing with the prostitute, that living embodiment of unrespectable femininity. Again The Masses' somewhat contradictory impulses become evident in that although these women were clearly identified as prostitutes, they were not always shown as deviant social types. (The magazine's treatment of prostitution will be discussed further in Section II.) While the prostitute was not always approached in terms of denigratory stereotypes and she was represented as having more freedom of movement than most women, she could not be mistaken for a flâneuse. While men were free to explore the city's inner recesses as cross-class tourists, while maintaining a distance, never losing their middle-class identity. Pictorial conventions governing the depiction of prostitutes underline that this urban character is not only contained by her environment but she is powerless to alter her social position. Such women were often portrayed as engulfed by their surroundings, whether a city setting or a courtroom scene. They were usually shown as social or economic victims who had no control over their fate. (By comparison, the flâneur is alluded to by his gaze, which bears masculinist qualities of power, possession and independence.) They inhabited a world in which men were free to visit, but there was no suggestion that the prostitute could leave her assigned social sphere. After all, prostitutes necessarily worked in public spaces and were not wandering at leisure. In other words, there is no mistaking them for flâneuses.

Over the course of 1914, Stuart Davis published three cover illustrations that featured "wandering women".[111] An absence of visual clues about these women's social and class status presents the viewer with a number of ambiguities. For instance, the wandering woman depicted on the cover of the December, 1914, issue [Fig. 5] ruptures a number of accepted pictorial conventions governing representations of the female figure. She is of monumental proportions, occupies the center of the composition, and dominates the entire landscape. Stepping directly towards the viewer, the woman looks off to the side, thereby appearing self-assured and forthright and yet remote. Her features are rendered to connote strength; her jaw and neck are broad and her posture and stride seem almost masculine. Furthermore, the picture's setting is ambiguous. There are no indications of a precise location; the viewer is only informed that the woman is outside and within the vicinity of an electric street lamp. The light and the night scene could suggest that the female figure is a streetwalker, but more visual information is required to be sure. In effect, the picture is mysterious precisely because it refuses to fix a simple meaning.

The wandering woman's sure-footed approach, her Amazon proportions, and the ease in which she moves through the night, ensures that she occupies a space somewhere between respectable and deviant femininity. In this respect, her position is similar to the one inhabited by feminists in both popular imagination and radical circles. Feminism was gaining momentum, especially in New York City, at exactly this moment. The challenge for feminists, wrote Edna Kenton in July, 1914, would be to place the individual interests of women before the common good of woman. The success of the movement depended on "the spiritual attitude of the individual woman to herself and to life, to the sense of freedom born within her that no one can give her and no one can take from her... ."[112] This new conception of the woman's movement *necessarily* excluded men; women's destiny ultimately had to be determined by women first, with or without male participation. For the male editors of The Masses the shift in feminist discourse was both thrilling and disturbing. On the one hand, feminists could unleash a regenerative power to assure sweeping cultural change. They could ride the wave of women's liberation. On the other hand, this liberation placed known definitions of femininity in limbo, rendering it more difficult to claim its terms to define their radical persona. Dell would later reflect, "We [men] were content with what was happening to woman because what we wanted was something for ourselves — a Glorious Playfellow. ...But they wanted something different — something for themselves."[113] The rebels were excited by the fluctuating definitions of femininity. Yet in lacking a definition, they mystified woman's shifting social status, situating her in the ambiguous ground between a myth and a metaphor.

Davis' wandering Amazon figure may be a response to these fluctuating definitions of femininity. This woman defies reassuring categories of womanhood. Walking confidently, she advances upon the spectator, filling up the entire composition. Moreover she averts her gaze away from the viewer, not demurely but rather as if she is intently observing something beyond the picture plane. She cannot be possessed, and maintains a distance from her audience. In the 1910s the flâneur was cast as an unconventional figure who asserted his individuality and sense of liberation by penetrating the dark corners of the city and crossing over traditional class boundaries. Yet, as noted previously with regard to the qualities of freedom and individuality ascribed to American realism, the flâneur similarly fit back into mainstream ideals of libertarianism or the "self-made man". This urban character may have been politically defiant insofar as he transgressed traditional social divisions. Yet his actions, while risqué, were not revolutionary. The woman pictured in Davis' drawing, however, defied not only conventions of class (she is not a social victim) but subverted ideas of proper gender identity as well. Just as the male members of the lyrical left envied the Village feminists for breaking more codes of respectable middle-class behavior than they ever could, this wandering woman is transposed to assume the masculine properties of the flâneur. Because her locale is ambiguous, and she cannot be categorized as a downtrodden member of the lower classes, or a victimized prostitute, she is removed to a mysterious plane. The image is the visual equivalent of The Masses' mystification of the modern feminist. In defying middle-class propriety and conventions of the unhappy social outcast she becomes a truly revolutionary character — the flâneuse.

However, female revolutionary symbols did not have to be anonymous or overtly working-class. A known personality such as Isadora Duncan could signify notions of unconventional femininity on which The Masses' subversive stance could be staked.

ISADORA DUNCAN AS REVOLUTIONARY SYMBOL: A CASE STUDY

Images of Isadora Duncan provide a useful case study of how socialist ideologies were re-worked and redefined as the stance of the American left shifted from an offensive to a largely defensive position. In part, this signification draws upon traditional liberty characters, as discussed earlier in this study. At the same time, the specific meanings encoded in these pictures of the dancer are firmly tied to the pictorial conventions associated with American realism and to modernism, introduced to the pages of The Masses after 1916.

On November 14, 1909, John Sloan encountered Isadora Duncan for the first time. He noted in his diary that she was "beautiful" but not "in the ordinary sense handsome." Overall, his impression of the renowned dancer was somewhat ambivalent. Two days later after viewing her perform he changed his opinion dramatically. Again he recorded his impressions in his diary:

> *Isadora Duncan*! ...I feel that she dances a symbol of human animal happiness as it should be, free from the unnatural trammels. Not angelic, materialistic — not superhuman but the greatest human love of life. Her great big thighs, her small head, her full solid loins, belly — clean, all clean — she dances away civilization's tainted brain vapors, wholly human and holy — part of God.

Three years earlier in Paris, Abraham Walkowitz was introduced to the dancer at Rodin's studio. The next day he attended a salon and met Duncan a second time. He decided to take in one of her Parisian performances, and like Sloan, was greatly impressed. Walkowitz later described Duncan as an "inspiration": "...she was a Muse. She had no laws. She didn't dance according to rules. She created. Her body was music. It was a body electric, like Walt Whitman."[114]

Both artists executed a number of studies of Isadora Duncan. Sloan made her the subject of several paintings and prints. Walkowitz, who declared that Duncan was like his personal calling card, depicted her in thousands of drawings.[115] In 1917, during its final months, The Masses published four of Walkowitz's studies; while the only one of Sloan's images of the dancer to appear in the magazine was featured on the back cover in May, 1915.

Although representations of female dancers and entertainers were always present in The Masses, they appeared with increasing frequency after the Artists' Strike of 1916. Since the core of the realist artists had left in that dispute, the tone of the illustrations substantially shifted. The politically engaged pictures are closer to newspaper editorial cartoons, while the body of "non-political" artwork consisted of stylized renditions of actresses and sketches of female nudes.[116] Zurier argues that these drawings "provided welcome distraction" from the news of the events in Europe: "As the war intensified, art came to be seen more and more as a private retreat, *away* from the realm of the masses."[117] Indeed, although they were vehemently opposed to American intervention in the hostilities, the editors of The Masses seemed to divide art and politics into separate spheres. As Zurier notes, the nude seemed to function as a synonym for pure, "high" art. And yet, however much the editors might have thought they were avoiding politics, the very act of dividing artistic and political images takes on political signification. The belief that "high" art is disinterested and neutral requires further investigation. Simply by virtue of their appearance in a radical political publication, these "apolitical" illustrations took on meanings other than those they might have acquired in a "high" art context. Moreover, these later representations of women continued to forge a political and social identity for the Village rebels, albeit in a slightly altered form of artistic discourse. In fact, the pictures of nudes and dancers operated as signifiers of class status and power by conferring on the viewer a sense of possessing and knowing high culture. In this way, these "apolitical" drawings — offered to viewers as "timeless" and "universal" images — represented an attempt by The Masses to ennoble the socialist cause at the very moment that American socialism, due to the European war and uneven electoral performances, was undergoing substantial shifts. (It was an attempt not appreciated in Socialist circles. For instance, the communists of later years would refer to these fine art pictures as evidence of The Masses' "mere Bohemianism.") In particular, representations of Isadora Duncan embodied the radical's search for a new cultural symbol. The revolutionary values ascribed to her image indicates a complex response to both the events of World War I, the shifting position of women, and the changing strategies of the American left.

Isadora Duncan achieved fame in the first decade of the twentieth century as an interpretive dancer. Breaking from the rigid, standardized movements associated with classical ballet, she based her dance on improvisation, natural movement, and an articulation of the poses and gestures of Greek art. Because she lived in Paris and toured major European urban centers (Berlin, London, Paris) her art was legitimatized for American audiences by virtue of Duncan's association with European culture. A flamboyant personality, the dancer also became a celebrity through her flaunting of middle-class conventions; she conducted numerous public love affairs, bearing two children out of wedlock. When in 1913 her two children were drowned in France, she was elevated in the public's mind to the status of tragic heroine. By the beginning of World War I, her reputation had achieved almost mythical proportions. She was vilified by some groups as a hedonistic threat to the ideals of the family and respectable femininity. To others — most notably the Greenwich Village rebels — Duncan was a glorious symbol of the power of unrestrained womanhood, romantic rebellion, and regeneration.

In terms of the imagery, I am more interested in addressing Duncan's importance as a revolutionary construct as opposed to her actual performances. A wide range of texts produced definitions about Duncan and her art which were invariably tied to discourses on American national identity and the nature of femininity. Because her dance incorporated free, liberated movement, and exploited the natural rhythms of the body in motion, Duncan's performances were compared to the American qualities of forthrightness and inventiveness. Her unaffected, spontaneous movement was often paralleled to a Whitmanesque conception of democracy. Robert Henri, who first met the dancer in 1908 and also rendered several studies of her, described Duncan using a nationalistic vocabulary:

> In seeing Isadora Duncan dance, I am always reminded of the great voice of Walt Whitman. Back of her gesture I see a deep philosophy of freedom and dignity, of simplicity and of order. She is one of the prophets who open to our vision the possibility of a life where full natural growth and full natural expression will be the aim of all people. When I see her dance, it is not only the beauty of her expression that fills me with emotion, but it is this promise she gives of a full and beautiful life for those who are to come.[118]

In her autobiography, Duncan recounted how the American sculptor, George Gray Barnard, had intended to use her image for a statue of "America Dancing", a play on Whitman's phrase, "I hear America singing." She so relished the idea of being a muse of American democracy, that she wrote of wanting to be shaped by Barnard: "With every atom of my being I longed to become the mobile clay under [Barnard's] sculptor's hands".[119] As mentioned previously, Walkowitz also felt the dancer affirmed a Whitmanesque conception of American democracy, or in his words was the "Walt Whitman of women."[120]

The structure of the critical discourse associated with dance facilitated the linkage of abstract ideals with Duncan's art and ultimately reinforced the tendency to use the dancer's image as a political symbol. To convey the nature of Duncan's performances to readers, reviewers reworked the somewhat intangible and abstract language of dance into an identifiable form. Duncan's deliberate emulation of Greek art (she had studied the Louvre's Victory of Samothrace, sketched Greek vases, and had read Winckelmann's Journey to Athens) evoked associations with the language of allegory, which although divorced from its historical narratives still retained its political efficacy. Most writers focused on the sense of release and liberation:

> ...[she] is a pagan spirit, stepping naturally from a bit of broken marble as if that were the most obvious thing in the world to do. A Galatea, perhaps, for certainly Galatea danced in the first few moments of her release. She is Daphne with loosened hair, escaping the embraces of Apollo in that Delphic Grove.[121]

Mary Fanton Roberts, who was a friend of the dancer, compared Duncan to Greek worshippers of Dionysus and said that the rhythm of her dance was in "perfect accord with the rhythm of the universe." A New York Sun commentator called her a "reincarnated Greek goddess" whose "instinct" it was to do battle "against the accepted order of things." The writer credited her with "the establishment of a 'Greek cult' and the appropriation of the Isadorian ideas for every 'cause' from dress reform to woman suffrage." Even Theodore Roosevelt emphasized a feeling of rebirth in Duncan's work: "She seems to me as innocent as a child dancing through the garden in the morning sunshine and picking the beautiful flowers of her fantasy."[122]

Thus Duncan's dance was consistently equated with intuition, nature, primitivism, and Greek paganism. She was defined as both a national product and a regenerative source. This prevailing interpretation defined her art as emanating from the true essence of femininity, where Duncan became the embodiment of nature's forces — wild, passionate and untamed, but never intellectual or civilized. This view reinforced a dominant notion of femininity and Duncan was understood to be fulfilling her nature as a *woman* rather than working as an *artist*. Such interpretations also provided enough distance from concrete associations to facilitate her appropriation by various progressive groups. Often Duncan was seen to be a womanly source of redemptive power. For instance, Mable Dodge recalled that:

> Power rose in her from her center and flowed vividly along her limbs before our eyes in living beauty and delight. The fire she knew how to release in her blood, traveling along her body, burned her clean and clear. No one could look so chaste and new as Isadora, washed in her own fine energy. This, then, I thought, is what genius is...it is knowing how to release the energy in one's atoms and then the flesh is born again.[123]

Duncan herself claimed that her dance strengthened women, offering them a chance to claim the terms of femininity. But she situated this new power within the ideology that defined women according to their bodies. Linking her dance with eugenics, Duncan argued, "It is not only a question of true art, it is a question of race, of the development of the female sex to beauty and health, of the return to the original strength and to natural movements of a woman's body. It is a question of the development of perfect mothers and the birth of healthy, beautiful children."[124]

John Sloan's crayon study of Isadora Duncan [Fig. 6] appeared amid a storm of controversy surrounding the dancer. Returning to New York in 1915, Duncan actively encouraged Americans to enter the war and fight for her beloved France. She began to dance to the revolutionary anthem, the *Marseillaise*, to arouse support for the French war effort. She explained, "Coming from bleeding, heroic France, I was indignant at the apparent indifference of America to the war, and one night after a performance at the Metropolitan Opera House, I folded my red shawl around me and improvised the 'Marseillaise'. It was a call to the boys of America to rise and protect the highest civilization of our epoch — that culture which has come to the world through France."[125] The United States was hardly "indifferent" to the European War; by 1915 debates over American intervention in the hostilities raged rampant. The mood of the country was distinctly isolationist, though the vast majority of citizens sympathized with the Allies. As a call to arms, Duncan's *Marseillaise* was widely condemned (further performances were forbidden and Duncan turned to military marches). Joseph Freeman recalled that leftist intellectuals were bitterly disappointed by these performances and Floyd Dell — who in 1913 had included Duncan in his Women as World Builders — was said to have "heaped...bitter scorn upon her... ."[126] However, as a song of revolution, Duncan's dance received much praise. By 1917, Duncan had reintroduced the *Marseillaise* to her repertoire; America had entered the war in April and this time it was greeted with enthusiasm. At the same time, the Socialist Party of America became the only political party to condemn U.S. participation in the hostilities. Waging a massive campaign against the U. S. war effort, socialists demonstrated an unprecedented amount of unity. Left and right factions wholeheartedly came together in the anti-war struggle. This activity resulted in attacks on socialist "loyalties". Party members were violently confronted by vigilante groups, and arrested as they handed out anti-war literature or as they spoke from their soapboxes. Their fortunes were considerably worsened in June with the passage of the Espionage Act, which essentially criminalized the anti-war effort. Yet, at this very moment, The Masses published Walkowitz's drawings of Isadora Duncan. Why would the socialist magazine use the image of such an ardent proponent of American intervention in the war?

On February 15, 1911, Sloan made the following entry in his diary:

> Isadora seems like *all* womanhood — she looms big as the the mother of the race. A heavy solid figure, large columnar legs, a solid high belly, breasts not too full and her head seems to be no more important than it should to give the body the chief place.

Sloan's drawing of the dancer seems to be almost directly derived from this description. The figure is isolated in the center of the composition and there is no other pictorial information to detract the viewer's attention from it. Emphasis is placed on the physicality of Duncan's body. Sloan exaggerates the curves of Duncan's hip and thigh area. She is shown in a pose suggestive of a march, with her arms outstretched, and is balanced on one leg while slightly leaning forward. Her head is relatively small compared to the massive bulk of her body and she wears a forceful, almost angry facial expression.

Sloan's representation of Duncan affirms her symbolic status as the embodiment of pure, unbridled femininity. The attention paid to her thighs and belly link her to the idea of the primitive sex goddess which reinforces the idea of woman as part of nature. Her wild facial expression, presented together with her small head, underline a lack of intellectual control — or intellect — while heightening a sense of unleased passion. The force behind her art, it is implied, is pure intuition. The dancer's raised leg and loose breasts barely covered in transparent gauze focus the viewer's attention on the sexual dimensions of her power and energy. And in fact the release of the female breast carries ancient connotations of liberation.[127] Thus the display of Duncan's body operates on two levels. First, she is equated with primitivism and its attendant cathartic pagan release, or what Sloan called "human animal happiness". Secondly, her pose and gesture recalls the dynamism of traditional allegorical figures of liberty. Although allegorical figures were largely absent in The Masses at this point, it should be recalled that both British and American suffrage imagery relied on similar types in their visual campaign. Allegorical signs of femininity associated with the woman's movement were widely circulated at this period, and hence may have influenced the magazine's audience's expectations of Sloan's drawing. Yet the sense of power and energy conveyed in the picture are more specifically attached to The Masses' brand of feminism.

Since the image of Isadora Duncan stood for the abstract qualities of liberation and freedom, the picture may not have worked as strictly a portrait of the dancer. The real Duncan was actively calling for Americans to enter World War I, but the symbolic Duncan — the Walt Whitman Duncan, the free, untamed spirit — had no such voice.

Perhaps this is why The Masses felt that the picture was appropriate for its back cover. Moreover, Duncan also functioned as a symbol of the New Morality. Her unconventional life style seemed to provide a perfect counterpoint to outworn middle-class sexual mores. Eastman would later characterize her in these very terms: "She rode the wave of revolt against puritanism; she rode it, and with her Fame and Dionysian raptures drove it on. She *was*— perhaps it is simplest to say — the crest of the wave, an event not only in art, but in the history of life."[128] The early months of 1915 not only saw increased suffrage activity, but it was also the time that the magazine was actively working on its campaign to raise funds for William Sanger's defence. As previously discussed, The Masses framed its argument as a challenge to the efforts of moral crusaders and puritanism in general. The fight against sexual repression was consolidated in the image of Isadora Duncan, whose openly expressed female sexuality seemed to promise cultural regeneration, at least to the male artists and editors of The Masses. In this way, her image conflated traditional and new notions of liberty. She acted as a sign of both political and personal freedom.

Carl Van Vechten, a prominent figure in New York's Little Renaissance, offers compelling evidence that Isadora Duncan's pantomime of the *Marseillaise* may have been interpreted by some as a generalized statement of revolutionary struggle rather than a specific reference to World War I. He described one of her performances in particularly lucid terms:

> ...In a robe the color of blood she stands enfolded; she sees the enemy advance; she feels the enemy as it grasps her by the throat; she kisses the flag; she tastes blood; she is all but crushed under the weight of the attack; and then she rises, triumphant, with the terrible cry, *Aux armes, citoyens*! Part of her effect is gained by gesture, part by the massing of her body, but the greater part by facial expression. In the anguished appeal she does not make a sound, beyond that made by the orchestra, but the hideous din of a hundred raucous voices seems to ring in our ears. We see Félicien Rops's "Vengeance" come to life; we see the *sans-culottes* following the carts of the aristocrats on the way to execution...and finally we see the superb calm,

> the majestic flowing strength of the Victory of Samothrace... . At times, legs, arms, a leg or arm, the throat, or the exposed breast assume an importance above that of the rest of the mass... .[129]

Isadora Duncan herself claimed "In my red tunic I have constantly danced the Revolution and the call to arms of the oppressed."[130] Moreover, the dancer explained that her art, by emphasizing free, natural movement, was inherently more American than the "artificial" and foreign ballet and she linked it — and thus herself — to the allegory of Liberty. "The real American type," she wrote, "can never be a ballet dancer... . By the wildest trick of the imagination you could not picture the Goddess of Liberty dancing the ballet."[131]

Two years later, a very different kind of Isadora Duncan appeared on the pages of The Masses. Abraham Walkowitz's studies [Figs. 7, 8], unlike Sloan's drawing, are a more economic treatment of the dancer. The form is less defined, as if to capture the spontaneity of the dancer's movement. It lacks the heavy, volumetric form of Sloan's picture thereby making the image less tangible and more ephemeral — as if it is a glimpse rather than a studied observation of the dancer in motion. Duncan almost seems to be floating. There is no suggestion of a face; the dancer is identified only through her gesture and pose.[132]

When Walkowitz's studies were published, New York State was once again in the midst of a suffrage campaign. For feminist socialists, however, the issue, while still regarded as important, had lost much of its urgency given the crisis they were facing in light of America's entry into World War I. The cultural symbols that seemed to bring new life to their cause only two years previously, now seemed ineffectual if not entirely inappropriate. Furthermore, because of financial setbacks, The Masses in 1917 was forced to use poorer quality paper and reduce its imagery. Sensing that their days were numbered, the editors poured all their energies into the written rather than visual components of the publication. In spite of these developments, The Masses featured Walkowitz's drawings prominently on its pages, all of which appeared during the final four months of its existence.

Late in 1917 as the U. S. government cracked down on socialist activity, the movement was infused with a revolutionary vigor that stood in marked contrast to the evolutionary philosophy of earlier years. As the only political party to denounce American participation in the war, its electoral fortunes vastly improved. One socialist defiantly stated: "The great victories that we are winning and that we are going to win are the most significant political events of the century...it is not a political revolution. It is *the* political revolution."[133] Although under siege, American socialism was ready and able to put up a fight and optimistic about its chances at success. (It would only be in early 1918 that the government sponsored attacks resulted in substantial disruption of socialist activity. These included, among other things, jailings, press censorship and lynching). The sense of persecution was particularly evident to the editors of The Masses. By August 1917, the magazine could no longer be delivered through the mail due to a provision of the Espionage Act that allowed the Postmaster General to confiscate matter urging "treason, insurrection, or forcible resistance to any law of the United States."[134] Without access to the mail service, The Masses could not survive, and it ceased publication at the end of 1917.

Given these events, the image of Isadora Duncan may have signified a renewed sense of revolutionary order. The *Marseillaise* had long been a rallying cry for radical political movements in the U. S. and thus Duncan's performance may have been linked to events at home rather than the hostilities abroad. The editors of The Masses had invested in her image all along as a symbol of hope for cultural regeneration and renewal, and during the final months of the journal's life these hopes acquired a renewed urgency. Because the dancer embodied the ideals of democracy, freedom, and liberalism, her image would have seemed particularly appropriate at a time when these ideals were under attack. Moreover, Walkowitz's drawing is rendered in a free, gestural sketch that already carried political significance. Thought to be a sign of unleashed femininity, Duncan conveyed the ideas of political struggle and revolutionary force traditionally ascribed to the figure of Liberty. In this instance, she represents the fight for civil as much as for political liberty. Often referred to as the "daughter of Dionysus", her "natural primitivism" and cathartic energy took on a moral force which once again affirmed the moral superiority of women. Now woman offered reassurance and redemption more than a chance at sweeping cultural transformation. Less tangible than Sloan's depiction, Walkowitz's portrayal of the dancer seems to be literally a spirit. The image occupies that ambiguous and imprecise ground that facilitates a "universal" and "timeless" reading. This time the editors were fighting for survival more than engaging in a Bohemian struggle against old systems and bourgeois morality. And as a symbol of woman, Duncan represented everything that the rebels wanted freedom to stand for as America entered the war. The category of woman — whose "instinct" it was to nurture and foster new life — stood for the very opposite of war.[135] The final irony is that the socialist allegorical studies of earlier years would re-emerge in the guise of Isadora Duncan during The Masses' final months. Although differently conceived, Crane's images of fruit goddesses and abstract virtues correspond to these later images of Isadora Duncan. Both were invested with the power of moral and spiritual redemption. Similarly they signified a righteous crusade. Most importantly, these two sets of imagery mobilized the notion of pure womanhood to validate these ideals and infuse the revolutionary cause with a sense of moral superiority. In light of the events of 1917, the magazine's editors' search for new meaningful cultural symbols could not be sustained. In a short period of five years, the process of signifying socialist content through the female figure had come full circle.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately it was the ennobled male worker who would dominate American socialist iconography. The social realists of the 1930s favored images of working men that were closer in conception to Charles Allen Winter's proletariat than to John Sloan's bachelor girl or Stuart Davis' African American woman. It seemed inconceivable to these artists, such as those associated with the John Reed Club, that representations of women could define a specifically leftist or socialist ideal with any degree of assurance. Moreover, the editors of the New Masses (published from 1926 to 1948, the journal was the voice for a new generation of communist-orientated leftists) dismissed The Masses' images of women as *ever* having worked in this manner. The female figure — the essential locus of bourgeois culture — was too closely linked with elitist high art and even worse, the ineffectual Bohemian.

An interesting exchange took place in 1929 that illustrates how the new "hard" left distinguished itself from the old lyrical left. In May of that year Floyd Dell resigned from the editorial staff of the New Masses . Mike Gold, the driving force behind the magazine, was swift to attack Dell. The former co-editor of the New Masses' namesake was condemned as a "Greenwich Village playboy". How could self respecting revolutionaries, asked Gold, take this "sex playboy" seriously? How could proper Marxists respect a man whose main interests "focused on the female anatomy?"[136] Gold was specifically speaking of Dell's literary work, but The Masses' representations of women were alluded to in Dell's retroactive counter attack. Long after the episode, he criticized the New Masses' illustrations for failing to represent the female figure in an attractive way. He said of these images of women: "The women always had square breasts — which seems to me to denote a puritanism and fanatical hatred of women as the source of pleasure."[137] In Dell's mind, images of women stood for all that he thought revolutionary. He implied that, rather than renounce woman as "the source of pleasure," socialists should mobilize this notion for their cause. The equation of radicalism and sexual gratification is particularly compelling. His worry that square breasts somehow denoted misogyny is especially revealing. The round female breast — presumably this is what Dell preferred to see — signified access to female sexuality and "timeless" sensuousness as well as pure "natural" womanliness. The female form may satisfy and fulfill the desires of men or generate a force of revolutionary proportions. Because women are so clearly different from men, they have the symbolic power to enact radical change. But their power is only symbolic. They are but ciphers for male defined freedom and liberation.

The historical circumstances that validated to Dell's conception of the revolutionary potential of female imagery were absent in the late 1920s. Women were constitutionally guaranteed the right to vote in 1920. The new sexually liberated woman was no longer a mystical possibility but very real personality in the persona of the Flapper. Although women had achieved the franchise there had been no radical cultural transformation. In fact the mood of the nation was decidedly conservative. Prohibition had become law; business was once again respectable — even popular. Republicans would occupy the White House throughout the decade until 1932. Furthermore,the American left had had its ranks severely depleted in the 1919 "Red Scare" with A. Mitchell Palmer's infamous raids against "Bolsheviks" and "red bombers". The maneuvering space that had existed for the American left in 1912 was severely restricted by 1920. For the "hard" communists of the 1920s a new language based on the "cult" of the proletariat seemed to be more effective than allegorical images of women such as those of famous American dancers.

Two events, one international and one domestic, shaped the political discourse of the postwar American left. After the Russian revolution in November 1917, these personalities, who included Michael Gold and Joseph Freeman, the self-professed inheritors of the lyrical left's investment in cultural issues, were offered a tangible example for which to strive. By the late twenties overt class conscious commentary was prescribed for left-wing artists under the rubric of "proletarian realism". Although no one could precisely define the vague term, it was largely understood to be a form of practical, functional realism that focused on the "real" conditions of labor. American communists assumed that this subject was best conveyed by images of the male proletariat. Furthermore, the symbolic value of worker's images took on added significance in light of the infamous Sacco and Vanzetti case of 1920-21. Nicola Sacco and Barolomeo Vanzetti, two known anarchists, were arrested in a 1920 Massachusetts payroll murder and, despite some irregularities at their trial, sentenced to death. For many leftists and more mainstream liberals, Sacco and Vanzetti were viewed as political prisoners, condemned to die because they were radicals and immigrants. After their execution in 1927 the two men were lionized by the American left as political and working-class martyrs. Thus on every level, the male worker was seen as the embodiment of the values and political identities of a new generation of American leftists.

Charges of frivolity and "mere Bohemianism" were not new to The Masses even in its hey-day. One orthodox socialist had described the magazine as "the product of the restless metropolitan coteries who devote themselves to the cult of Something Else; who are ever seeking the bubble Novelty at the door of Bedlam."[138] Another critic claimed "The Masses was too fond of the picturesque, which could be accepted 'in a mere Bohemian' but was distinctly "reprehensible in a revolutionist."[139] Since the female figure is so closely associated with "politically neutral" art and bourgeois culture in general, it was possible that The Masses' predilection for images of women made the publication's devotion to the cause seem questionable. Evidence that this was the case comes from the magazine's personalities themselves. In a newspaper interview given shortly after the 1916 Artists' Strike, Art Young said of the dissenting artists:

> They want to run pictures of ash cans and girls hitching up their skirts in Horatio Street — regardless of ideas — and without title. On the other hand a group of us believe that such pictures belong better in exclusive art magazines... . [It] looks unreasonable to me for artists who delight in portraying sordid and bourgeois ugliness to object to a "policy".[140]

Young deliberately singled out pictures of sexually suggestive women as inappropriate vehicles for political commentary. Moreover, he linked them to bourgeois art magazines, which suggested a connection between the licentiousness of both the artists and the elitists who consume images of women. Even Floyd Dell pointed to the lack of overt political meaning in female imagery: "...we thought that if a picture showed two frowsy girls talking together...the picture [should] have some kind of meaning." He also noted that pictures of pretty girls with no clothes on "elicited letters that argued, 'Such...pictures as these...do not advance the cause of socialism.'"[141]

In many ways, The Masses' use of female imagery points to larger, culturally rooted problems inherent in the depiction of women. The magazine's political engagement serves to emphasize rather than explain the complexity of visually representing the female form. Social and political practices that operate to fix the meaning of Woman and femininity were reproduced in The Masses' representations of women. As a site of moral redemption or a cipher of male defined freedom, these representations affirmed a viewpoint that constructs women as different from men. The actual conditions of women's existence were obscured, rather than aided, when the magazine's editors placed woman's situation on an almost mystical plane. As a source of cultural transformation and national renewal, women were viewed as "naturally" in possession of those romantic revolutionary traits desired by The Masses' male personalities. Defined as Other, women were closer to nature, more primitive, and more passionate than "artificial" men, the possessors of civilization. The unleashing of the essential feminine would enable the coming of a new culture; but the leadership of this revolutionary process was understood to be in the hands of men. The visibility of female sexuality connoted a free, liberated male; the wider implications of the display of the female body for women were not considered. The questioning of Puritan morality was understood in terms of a wide range of discourses on femininity. Thus on a multiplicity of levels, representations of women proved a flexible and accessible signifier of revolutionary ideals. Yet in moments of heated exchange — when "hard" political commentary was valued most — The Masses' representations of women were used as evidence of "Bohemianism" and lack of commitment to the cause of radicalism. In other words, the female form was not thought of as a useful means of questioning the social structure. It is at these moments when the ideology of separate spheres, which informed woman's status as Other all along, becomes pronounced. The work of effecting political change can only take place in the privileged masculinist public sphere. At these junctures in the political left representations of women become too bourgeois and elitist. Women were perceived as the opposite of revolutionary forcefulness, or the virility and strength needed to exact political change, or, in a word, Men.

NOTES

1. The idealized male laborer was first developed as an identifiable type in nineteenth century art. The idea that work developed moral fiber and embodied a healthy, purposeful life gained currency in the years following the Industrial Revolution. The heroic laborer is usually portrayed as strong (both physically and mentally), courageous, and is usually rendered on a large scale. In noting that the idealized male laborer became more frequently associated with a particularly socialist iconography towards the turn of the century, Eric Hobsbawn attributes the tendency to a reflection of the period's male and female divisions of labor. Perhaps it is more illuminating to note that these representations operated to reproduce gender difference in the working sphere. See Eric Hobsbawn, "Man and Woman in Socialist Iconography," History Workshop 6 (Autumn 1978):121-138.

2. Patricia Hills discusses this tendency specifically in an American context in The Working American (District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, 1975).

3. Maurice Agulhon, "On Political Allegory: A Reply to Eric Hobsbawn," History Workshop 8 (Autumn 1979):170. See also Marianne into Battle: Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880. translation by Janet Lloyd (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

4. See, for example, John Spargo, "Constantin Meunier: Painter and Sculptor of Toil," Comrade 1 (August 1901):246-248.

5. This problem is discussed in greater detail in Yvonne Korshak, "The Liberty Cap as a Revolutionary Symbol in America and France," Smithsonian Studies in American Art 2 (Fall 1987):53-69.

6. Exceptions are sometimes found in Abolitionist imagery. Perhaps the most well known example is Samuel Jennings' Genius of American Encouraging the Emancipation of the Blacks (1790-1792). For an analysis of abolitionist imagery and how it worked in a feminist context see Jean Fagan Yellin, Women and Sisters: The Antislavery Feminists in American Culture (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989). Although the liberty cap was not used in any official capacity, it nonetheless is present in a number of non-abolitionist images. Discussions of the various guises of the Liberty character in an American context are found in: Joshua C. Taylor, America As Art (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976); E. McClung Fleming, "From Indian Princess to Greek Goddess: The American Image, 1785–1815," Winterthur Portfolio 3 (1967):37-66; and E. McClung Fleming, "Symbols of the United States: From Indian Queen to Uncle Sam," in Ray B. Browne et al., Frontiers of American Culture (LayFayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1968):1-24.

7. Fluctuations in definitions of American liberty are analyzed in Michael Kammen, Spheres of Liberty: Changing Perceptions of Liberty in American Culture (Ithaca, N.Y. and London: Cornell University Press, 1986).

8. Eugene V. Debs, *Unionism and Socialism: A Plea for Both* (Terre Haute, Indiana: Standard, 1904):n.p. Eugene V. Debs was the principle spokesperson for American socialism throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century.

9. Standard texts on the development of the American left during the Progressive era include: Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967); Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America (1889-1963): The Intellectual as a Social Type* (New York: Knoff, 1965); and James Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America* (New York: Monthly Review, 1967).

10. Statistics are derived from Weinstein, pp. 84-93.

11. Newspaper account cited in Mary Ann Stankiewicz, "Art at Hull House, 1889-1901: Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr," *Woman's Art Journal* 10 (Spring/Summer 1989):35-39.

12. Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988):32.

13. For a useful analysis of Crane's impact on American socialism see Donald Drew Egbert, *Socialism and American Art; In the Light of European Utopianism, Marxism, and Anarchism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967). For a chronicle of Crane's activities during his U. S. tour, see Isobel Spencer, *Walter Crane* (London: Studio Vista, 1975).

14. Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870-1920* (Chicago and Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981):249.

15. Excerpt from Frances Willard's presidential address to the 1897 convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, cited in Weinstein, p. 53. The WCTU was among the most prominent of the prohibitionist organizations. Significantly Crane had been asked to design wallpaper and execute two panels for the WCTU building at the 1893 Columbia Exposition.

16. Woman as a discursive entity, as opposed to a psychological being, was formulated by Elizabeth Cowie in "Woman as Sign," *M/F* 1 (1978). For a recent analysis of the sign of Woman see Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988).

17. "Greeting," *Comrade* 1 (October 1901):12.

18. For example, the cover illustration for the September, 1902 issue, entitled *The Tragedy of the Vote: Behind the Soldier's Bullet is the Unconscious Worker's Ballot,* features such a worker. A male laborer is shown holding nothing but a scythe but stares defiantly at a group of armed soldiers. Behind the worker is a woman who sobs uncontrollably as her children tug at her dress. The cover for the January, 1904, edition of the journal shows a piece called *The Struggle for Work* by Gellert. The pyramidal composition places a defiant male worker at the apex and a sobbing female figure at the base of the sculpture.

19. For a discussion of this controversy and reproduction of The Strike see Patricia Hills, The Working American, pp. 9-10. A reproduction of this picture was unavailable for this study. For an interesting case study of nineteenth century labor imagery see Thomas H. Pauly, "American Art and Labor: The Case of Anshutz's The Ironworkers' Noontime." American Quarterly 40 (September 1988):333-358.

20. The Haymarket rally refers to an 1886 meeting of Chicago striking workers, and labor and anarchists in Haymarket Square. When police attempted to break up the demonstration, a bomb was thrown, killing seven police officers and wounding sixty-seven others. Police fired on the workers resulting in four more deaths. After this bloody event there was a tremendous backlash against the labor movement and American anarchism. Seven anarchists were convicted of the crime in what proved a questionable trial. Four were executed.

21. Roland D. Sawyer, "The Highest Form of Art Can be Surpassed by Adding Usefulness," Masses 2 (January 1912):8.

22. Lincoln Steffens, "Eugene V. Debs," Everybody's 19 (October 1908):458. In the interview Debs also alluded to what socialists could learn from artists: "If we compete it will be as artists do, and all good men, in skill, productiveness and good works."

23. Louis Baury, "The Message of the Proletaire," Bookman 34 (December 1911):413.

24. Lasch, op. cit. *passim*.

25. An example of this philosophy is particularly evident in the writings of Hutchins Hapgood, a prominent Village radical. See Types from the City Streets (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1910).

26. The personalities associated with Progressive era liberalism include Randolph Bourne, Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and Van Wyck Brooks. Publications such as New Republic and Seven Arts provided vehicles for the liberals' brand of social criticism.

27. Floyd Dell, "Books," Liberator 1 (December 1918):45.

28. Mabel Dodge Luhan, Movers and Shakers (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1936):90.

29. Floyd Dell, Homecoming: An Autobiography (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1933):218.

30. Max Eastman, Enjoyment of Living (New York: Harper, 1948):399.

31. Leslie Fishbein, Rebels in Bohemia: The Radicals of The Masses, 1911-1917 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

32. Henry May, The End of American Innocence: A Study of the First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1917 (New York: Knopf, 1959).

33. Marina Warner, Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form (New York: Atheneum, 1985):292-293.

34. See Pollock, op. cit.; Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker, Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology (New York: Pantheon, 1981); Linda Nochlin, Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays (New York: Harper & Row, 1989); Lynda Nead, Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

35. The full text:

> ...do you know what the above pretty picture is? No? Then I will tell you. It is the Happy Home — one of the millions of Happy Homes which many people tell us that Socialism is trying to destroy...Is it not a beautiful place? Observe the air of sweetness and comfort which breathes over it. See the Mother, oh so happy, saying fond farewell to the little ones. She has a cape over her shoulder and her hand is at the door. Maybe she is going calling, or to the opera. See the sweet-faced older daughter. Is it not nice for one so young to take care of such a fine baby? She is asking her mother whether it will be better for the baby to have eggs (at 40 c. a dozen) or some fresh vegetables (at 5 c. an ounce) for supper. And the two boys — how prettily they play among their toys. They will grow up to be splendid men and fine citizens in such clean and healthy surroundings, you may be sure! Is it not too bad of Socialism to try and break up such a Happy Home?

36. Buhle, p. 262.

37. In Ibid. p. 214. The poem was originally published in 1912.

38. Eastman, "Knowledge and Revolution," Masses 4 (January 1913):5.

39. Cited in Edward Abrahams, The Lyrical Left and the Origins of Cultural Radicalism in America (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986):48.

40. Walter Lippmann, "In Defense of the Suffragettes," Harvard Monthly 49 (November 1909):65-66.

41. Eastman, "Knowledge and Revolution," Masses 4 (April 1913):6.

42. Excerpt from unidentified press clipping reprinted in Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 316.

43. Ibid., p. 306.

44. The housekeeping metaphor was often mobilized by the suffragists. The underlying rationale for this equation was that if women could apply their domestic skills to the political arena they would make government as clean and efficient as their households.

45. Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 420.

46. Floyd Dell, Intellectual Vagabondage: An Apology for the Intelligentsia (New York: Doran, 1926):139.

47. "Freedom for Men!" Masses 5 (October 1913):18.

48. Dell, "Freedom for Men!" Masses (July 1914):19.

49. Susan Glaspell, The Road to the Temple (New York: Stokes, 1927):250.

50. Havelock Ellis published a multivolume study on human sexuality. William Morris' News from Nowhere discussed the possibility of free-love; the book was serialized in Comrade in 1901. Edward Carpenters' Love's Coming of Age also focused on sexual mores.

51. See June Sochen, The New Woman: Feminism in Greenwich Village, 1910-1920 (New York: Quadrangle, 1972). For a case study of a New Woman see Lois Palken Rudnick, Mabel Dodge Luhan: New Woman, New Worlds (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984).

52. Eastman, "Is the Truth Obscene?" Masses 6 (March 1915):6.

53. Overall reader response was positive. A selection of letters on this issue were published in Masses 6 (April 1915):23-24.

54. Fishbein, p. 5.

55. Dell, "Adventures in Anti-Land," Masses 7 (November 1915):7.

56. Eastman, "Confessions of a Suffrage Orator," Masses 7 (October/November 1915):8.

57. Fishbein, p. 4.

58. Robert Henri, "The New York Exhibition of Independent Artists," Craftsman 18 (May 1910):161-162.

59. G. Egerton [Mary Fanton Roberts], "The Younger American Painters: Are They Creating a National Art?" Craftsman 8 (February 1908):512.

60. Ibid.

61. Henri, "Progress in Our National Art...," Craftsman 15 (January 1909):392;388.

62. Guy Pène du Bois, Artists Say the Silliest Things (New York: American Artists' Group, 1940):83.

63. Charles Wisner Barrell, "The Real Drama of the Slums as Told in John Sloan's Etchings," Craftsman 15 (February 1909):564.

64. J. B. Larric, "John Sloan — Etcher," Coming Nation 69 (6 January 1912):3-4.

65. Zurier, p. 125.

66. Ibid., p. 131.

67. Ibid., p. 127.

68. Albert Boime, "Political Signification and Ambiguity in the Oil Sketch," Arts 62 (September 1987):42.

69. John Sloan, Gist of Art: Principles and Practice Expounded in the Classroom and Studio (New York: American Artists' Group, 1939):41.

70. Henri, "Progress in Our National Art...," p. 387.

71. Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 398.

72. Sloan, in Helen Farr Sloan verbatim notes, John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware; Eastman, "What's the Matter with Magazine Art?" Masses 6 (January 1915):12.

73. Ibid., p. 13.

74. George Bernard Shaw statement in New Statesman was reprinted in Masses 6 (July 1915):27; Robert Herrick, "By-Products of a Novelist: Youth's Fervor in The Masses," Chicago Tribune (22 February 1914).

75. Letter from E. W. Scripps (a famous publisher) to another Masses financial backer, cited in Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 461.

76. Ibid., p. 540. Hapgood justified this new look in Harper's (16 August 1913):3. He wrote:

> We do not expect Harper's to publish much illustration that is standardized or stereotyped, although doubtless we shall have to do a certain amount of this, especially until we have been running on the new lines long enough to become recognized as the medium for the kind of thing we have in mind. This work will be largely a by-product of some of our best illustrators. What we want is not what they do because there is widespread demand for it, but what they do because it expresses them as intelligent, gifted men. It is the thing that they would do for a dinner of artists in which every artist was contributing something which he knew would be appreciated by his friends but would hardly be sought for by the department store publications.

77. Letters are all from Masses 7 (December 1915):20. Other comments made in the correspondence suggest that many of these letter writers were party workers.

78. Letter cited in Dell, "What Does it Mean?" Masses 8 (April 1916):23.

79. Letter signed H. Gifford, in Masses 8 (March 1916):20.

80. Evening Post in Frank Weitenkampf, "American Cartoons of To-Day," Century 85 (January 1913):540; Weitenkampf quotations, p. 548; p.551.

81. Reprinted in "American and French Caricature," Literary Digest 46 (26 April 1913):948.

82. Current Literature 53 (October 1912):461-464. Cited in this article is a comment from the St. Louis Mirror: "Boardman Robinson has the finest, freest, swashing stroke, the greatest daring in massing his black and letting in his white."

83. See, for example, Henry James, "Daumier, Caricaturist," Century 39 (January 1890):402-413; Elisabeth Luther Cary, "Daumier's Caricatures," Putnam's 2 (August 1907):580-589; and Frank Weitenkampf, op. cit.. Reviews of the graphic art done by certain Masses staff members also made favorable references to these artists' affinities with Daumier. For instance, one critic praised John Sloan for capturing "representations of character, both external and internal, [notice that] not even Daumier himself has done anything finer." William B. M'Cormick, "The Realism of John Sloan," Arts and Decoration 5 (August 1915):391. (According to a note in the John Sloan Collection, M'Cormick was upset that this article was edited "...to the point that crucial ideas were not well presented.") For a discussion of Daumier's impact on magazines and American art collectors, see Francine Tyler, "The Impact of Daumier's Graphics on American Artists: c. 1863-c. 1923," Print Review 11 (1980):109-126; see also Ben Goldstein, "Daumier's Spirit in American Art," in the same issue, pp. 127-144.

In addition to viewing Daumier's lithographs in American publications, The Masses' artists collected his work, as well as graphics by Steinlen and Forain. Art Young owned several Daumier lithographs. Boardman Robinson and Robert Minor eagerly studied the work of the French artist and sought to assimilate his style into their own work. Robert Henri had introduced many of his followers, including John Sloan, to Daumier. Sloan collected satirical European journals and aside from Daumier, particularly admired Steinlen's work. Kenneth Chamberlain and Maurice Becker both owned copies of L'Assiette au Beurre. For an insightful analysis of The Masses' links to the European artists and a technical description of how the crayon technique was adapted to its format, see Zurier, pp. 129-138.

84. Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 415.

85. Zurier, p. 126.

86. Mabel Dodge, Movers and Shakers, p. 90.

87. Often the socially conscious and overtly political art produced by left-wing American artists is characterized as the romantic visions of a naive few. Modernist art historians tend to expunge the political content of this artwork by emphasizing its humanitarian and thus universal concerns. This tendency and the "socialism as Americanism" theory may explain the question, "Why so little socialism in American art?" This phrase, of course, is a variation on the query first posed by Werner Sombart in 1905: "Why no socialism in America?"

For an analysis of Popular Front politics see Daniel Aaron, Writers on the Left: Episodes in American Literary Communism (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1961). For a recent reassessment of the impact of the Popular Front in American art see Cécile Whiting, Antifascism in American Art (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989). A discussion of the "tradition of dissent" is found in David Kunzle, "Two Hundred Years of the Great American Freedom to Complain," Art in America 65 (March/April 1977):99-105.

88. Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions (New York: New American Library, 1953):126.

89. Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," op. cit., p. 67. See also Janet Wolff, "The Invisible *Flâneuse*: Women and the Literature of Modernity," Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory 2 (1985):35-46.

90. On the links between American and French Realism see William Innes Homer, Robert Henri and his Circle (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1969).

91. Robert Henri, "Progress in Our National Art...," op. cit. p. 388. Some commentators on the American Realists have suggested that assertions of masculinity insured that the artists would not be dismissed as effeminate aesthetes; or that it took a "real man" to paint the everyday. But these artists' concerns for public life and national artistic identities could only be defined in the masculinist terms that engendered these concepts. Their critical vocabularies were tied to those ideas — strength, power, originality — that reproduce the ideological category of Man. See Peter Conn, The Divided Mind: Ideology and Imagination in America, 1898-1917 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983):261-263.

Although Robert Henri taught and supported many female artists and had links with the feminist community (he was friends with Emma Goldman) his critical vocabulary alters significantly according to the gender of the artist. For example, when discussing the work of Rockwell Kent he notes:

> He is interested in everything; in political economy, in farming, in every phase of industrial prosperity. He cannot do without this interest in his art. The very things that he portrays on his canvas are the things that he sees written in the great organization of life and his painting is a proclamation of the rights of man, of the dignity of man, of the dignity of creation.

With regard to John Sloan:

> [There] is John Sloan, with his demand for the rights of man, and his love of the people; his keen observation of the people's folly, his knowledge of their virtues and his surpassing interest in all things. I have never met Sloan but what he had something new to tell me of some vital thing in life that interested him, and which probably was eventually typified in his work (Robert Henri, "The New York Exhibition of Independent Artists," p. 162).

Here Henri emphasizes an interest in everyday experience based on knowledge, civil liberties, intelligence, or other external properties. However in his characterization of Dorothy Rice's work he emphasizes "feminine" qualities of empathy and intuition:

> She has a vital interest and a psychological understanding of and sympathy with the people she paints. It is because she is so intensely interested in life, in all life, and practically free of professional educators, that she has gone directly to the finding of this specific technique which she has for the expression of her ideas. (Ibid., p. 169).

92. Extracts from the diary are in published in Bruce St. John (ed), John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence, 1906-13. Introduction by Helen Farr Sloan (New York: Harper & Row, 1965). For the sake of clarity excerpts from the Diary are cited according to dates only.

93. Helen Farr Sloan verbatim notes. John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.

94. Patricia Hills, "John Sloan's Images of Working-Class Women: A Case Study of the Roles and Interrelationships of Politics, Personality, and Patrons in the Development of Sloan's Art, 1905-16," Prospects 5 (1980):176. Hills is addressing the argument that Sloan's "voyeuristic" views of women stem from a repressed sexual identity. This analysis is found in John Baker, "Voyeurism in the Art of John Sloan: The Psychodynamics of a 'Naturalistic' Motif," Art Quarterly 1 (Autumn 1978):379-395. Both articles fail to consider the larger implications of the anonymous observation of women.

95. Newspaper review cited in Judith Zilczer, "The Eight on Tour, 1908-1909," American Art Journal 16 (Summer 1984):34.

96. Zurier, p. 153.

97. My discussion of middle-class views on the domestic atmosphere of the working class is derived from Lizabeth A. Cohen, "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915," Journal of American Culture 3 (Winter 1980):752-775. Cohen observes that workers favored a taste for excessive ornamentation since they believed it signified comfort and greater social status. By the 1910s, progressive reformers were actively campaigning to eliminate what they considered to be an inferior or tacky aesthetic among the working class.

98. Suzanne L. Kinser has suggested that hats of these kind signified prostitution, though her discussion does not include The Bachelor Girl. See Suzanne L. Kinser, "Prostitutes in the Art of John Sloan," Prospects 9 (1984):231-254. Her rather illuminating arguments are marred by her view that Sloan's representations of prostitutes document real conditions of this social practice.

99. For example, see W. L. George, "Feminist Intentions," Atlantic Monthly 112 (December 1913):721-731; Gertrude Atherton, "What is Feminism?" Delineator, 89 (October-December 1916); and Evelyn King Gilmore, "Feminism," Harper's 62 (11 March 1916):310. Both negative and positive reviews of the Armory Show (1913), which introduced European modernism to the American general public, often mention feminism in this way.

100. The comment is directed at a drawing by Stuart Davis entitled Hobohemia (c. 1915). "Sad and Serious Reflections on the First Salon of American Humorists," Current Opinion 58(June 1915):429.

101. Emma Goldman, Anarchism and Other Essays (New York: Dover, 1969. reprint of 1917 edition):208.

102. Ibid., p. 211. Many of The Masses' personalities had a tremendous amount of respect for Emma Goldman. Yet both Eastman and Sloan characterized her as "humorless", and too serious about her cause. Eastman stated in his autobiography that he "never liked Emma Goldman very well" (Enjoyment of Living, p. 423). Sloan, after having attended a lecture given by the anarchist, confided to his diary on November 12, 1911, that, "She was good but here and there demanded too much social consciousness from the artist." However, to the public at large, The Masses and Goldman were synonymous and would be referred to interchangeably. This tendency is perhaps a reflection on the magazine's inability to articulate a political program other than an ambiguous "radicalism".

103. Dell, cited in Fishbein, p. 136.

104. Meta Stern, "Votes for Women," New York Call (21 February 1915). The current whereabouts of this design is unknown, and I have not encountered any other references to it. Sloan had been asked in the past to design suffrage banners but it is not known whether or not he actually completed these requests.

105. Floyd Dell, "Burlesquerie," Masses 6 (January 1916):15. See also Christopher P. Wilson, "Broadway Nights: John Reed and the City," Prospects 13 (1988):273-294.

106. Stuart Davis, "Autobiography," in Diane Kelder (ed), Stuart Davis (New York: Praeger, 1971):21.

107. Zurier's discussion of The Masses' representations of blacks is found on pp. 148-151.

108. NAWSA ran a blatantly racist campaign which stressed that a black man could vote but a white woman could not. Anti-suffragists frequently espoused the notion that emancipated Anglo-Saxon women would no longer produce enough children to counter the "breeding" of blacks and immigrants. Orthodox socialists claimed that questions of race obfuscated class issues. Although the Socialist Party officially was opposed to racist practices, they never made racial issues central to their platform. Only "Big" Bill Haywood's Industrial Workers of the World made the position of blacks an integral part of its political agenda.

109. Fishbein, p. 162.

110. "The Masses and the Negro: A Criticism and a Reply," The Masses 6 (May 1915):6.

111. In addition to the cover discussed below, Davis' wandering women are found in the cover of The Masses 5 (May 1914) and The Masses 6 (January 1915). The former depicts two women in what appears to be a park; the latter shows a rear view of three women in an urban setting.

112. Edna Kenton, "Edna Kenton Says Feminists Will Give —," Delineator 85 (July 1914):17.

113. Dell, Intellectual Vagabondage, p. 139.

114. Abram Lerner and Bartlett Cowdrey, "A Tape-Recorded Interview with Abraham Walkowitz," Journal of the Archives of American Art 9 (January 1969):15.

115. Walkowitz also boasted, "I have done more Isadora Duncan than I have hair on my head." Both quotations are in *Ibid*.

116. Frank Walts did several cover illustrations featuring popular female entertainers. The nudes were contributed by several artists, including Arthur B. Davies, Jo Davidson, and John Storrs. Sloan's *Adam and Eve* series, which featured a large nude Eve, was published in the March, 1913, and January, 1916, issues. In addition to these drawings, another female nude study by Sloan appeared in March, 1916. A drawing by George Bellows that depicts what seem to be four or five nude prostitutes is found in the January, 1916, issue. According to an editorial in the March, 1913, number, Sloan's Adam and Eve drawings were criticized by readers who felt Eve was unattractive and "too fat".

117. Zurier, p.158.

118. Henri's comment is found in a 1915 dance program entitled *Dionysion*. A copy is available in the John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware. The statement also appeared in "Isadora Duncan's Art," *Literary Digest* 50 (1 May 1915), p. 1018. The *Dionysion* was put together by the Committee for the Furtherance of Isadora Duncan's Work in America. Among those listed are: Gutzon Borglum, George Bellows, Arthur B. Davies, Randall Davey, Theodore Dreiser, Max Eastman, Abastenia St. Eberle, Robert Henri, Walter Lippmann, Mary Fanton Roberts, John Sloan, John Butler Yates (sic).

119. Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (London and New York: Sphere Books, 1988. reprint of 1927 edition), p. 157.

120. Cited in Abraham A. Davidson, *Early American Modernist Painting, 1910-1935* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981):36.

121. This review is of a Duncan performance given exclusively for poets and artists. *New York Sun* (15 November 1908).

122. Mary Fanton Roberts, "The Dance of the Future as Created and Illustrated by Isadora Duncan," *Craftsman* 13 (October 1908):48-56; *New York Sun* review reprinted in "Isadora Duncan's Art," *op. cit.*; Theodore Roosevelt in Isadora Duncan, *op. cit.* p. 163. Roosevelt was addressing charges of Duncan's immorality made by several Washington, D. C. ministers in 1908.

123. Mabel Dodge, *Movers and Shakers*, p. 319.

124. Duncan, "The Dance," in *Dionysion*.

125. Duncan, *My Life*, p. 226.

126. Joseph Freeman, *An American Testament: A Narrative of Rebels and Romantics* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1936) p. 95.

127. The exposed or released female breast as a cipher of revolutionary liberation is discussed in Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 267-293. The most frequently cited example of this iconographical device is Delacroix's *Liberty Guiding the People* (1831).

128. Cited in Fishbein, p. 44.

129. Carl Van Vechten, "The New Isadora," in Paul Magriel (ed), Isadora Duncan (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947) p. 31.

130. Duncan, My Life, p. 239.

131. Ibid. p. 244.

132. This type of rendition is far more common in pictures of the dancer than Sloan's emphasis on mass and weight. Walkowitz, through his European travels and associations with the Stieglitz group, would have been aware of similar treatments of Duncan by European artists. Among these artists who rendered the dancer's image in loose, gestural sketches were Auguste Rodin, Eugène Carrière, Maurice Denis, André Dunoyer de Segonzac, and Grandjouan (a former lover of Duncan's). American artists who used similar formal conventions include Robert Henri, and Van Deering Perrine (whose crayon drawing was featured on the cover for Duncan's Russian tour of 1921). The French sculptor, Antoine Bourdelle, also executed numerous studies of the dancer. A program cover of a 1926 recital in Nice features a highly schematic depiction of Duncan by Jean Cocteau.

133. New York Call (18 October 1917). Cited in Weinstein, p. 148.

134. Terms of the Espionage Act are outlined in Ibid., p. 144.

135. Interestingly, Walkowitz published a portfolio of his drawings of Isadora Duncan in 1945, which included a series of anti-facist images. One drawing depicts Duncan dancing and wearing a banner inscribed "All religion — one religion — no war — fight for Democracy." In another image Duncan stretches a banner behind her back that reads "Fight Fascism — world peace — Hitler" and wears a crest that proclaims, "Peace can only be obtained in the defeat of Nazism and Fascism." Other renditions feature the dancer emblazoned with Nazi statements such as, "Women must bear children for me — Hitler," and "All children belong to me — Hitler." See Abraham Walkowitz, Isadora Duncan in Her Dances (Girard, Kansas: Haldeman-Julius, 1945).

136. The episode is related in Daniel Aaron, op. cit. p. 216.

137. Letter cited in Ibid. p. 218.

138. W. J. Ghent, "Here and There: A Merger Among the Highbrows," California Outlook 20 (August 1916):107.

139. E. Ralph Cheney, "Costly Luxuries," Masses 8 (May 1916):22.

140. "Clash of Classes Stirs 'The Masses'," New York Sun (8 April 1916). Press clippings about the strike are available in the Stuart Davis Scrapbooks, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

141. Floyd Dell, "Memories of the Old Masses," American Mercury 68 (April 1949):485.

SECTION II

THE MASSES' SUFFRAGE IMAGERY

This section investigates The Masses' suffrage imagery. Rather than survey this body of work, I will focus on representative examples from the years 1913, 1915, and 1917. Suffrage-related pictures published at these points mark a complex response of the lyrical left to the changing discourse surrounding the drive for female enfranchisement. They also provide a useful case study of how fluctuating definitions of femininity could mediate Progressive era social, political, and national values for both vanguard and mainstream groups. While appearing to be at odds, dissident and establishment ideologies were often mutually reinforcing and, as is demonstrated in The Masses' suffrage illustrations, worked to uphold pervasive stereotypes about women and their claim to political power.

INTRODUCTION

In addition to organizing and participating in meetings, rallies, and parades devoted to the drive for woman suffrage, members of Greenwich Village's lyrical left promoted the cause in numerous poems, plays, novels, and short stories.[1] Given this mobilization of literary work to advance women's fight for the vote, it is surprising to note the lack of a similar investment in visual material. Here The Masses was an exception. The journal published more suffrage illustrations than any other vanguard periodical of the time. Picked up and circulated in other magazines, its suffrage imagery eventually came to represent an especially radical perspective on the issue.

Like their mainstream suffragist counterparts, the Village rebels never fully utilized pictorial sources on the same scale as, say, the British suffragettes.[2] In this respect, opponents to woman suffrage had a distinct advantage. "Anti" cartoons and illustrations proliferated across the nation and were widely circulated in the popular press. Thus, by the early 1910s, visual conventions for suffrage imagery were largely defined by anti-suffrage interests. This was not because positive visual treatments of suffrage issues and figures were non-existent (although much of this artwork remains undocumented[3]), but rather because such work did not achieve the level of cohesiveness found in the British campaign and never seriously challenged the negative visual stereotypes of suffragists which pervaded the popular imagination. In effect, as the campaign intensified in the 1910s, pro-suffrage forces never reallly utilized visual resources as a point of entry into suffrage debates.

This gap in the pictorial formulation of suffrage arguments facilitated The Masses' contributions to the pool of suffrage imagery. By virtue of its subversive Bohemian stance, the magazine acquired an unique — but highly problematic — ability to visually narrate key aspects of women's quest for the ballot. At stake was the right to define the cultural vanguard's investment in suffrage issues and set up a counter-discursive pictorial framework for suffrage imagery, which would be injected into public discourse.

As Lisa Tickner has shown, "official" suffrage pictures relied on an established repertoire of visual codes designed to convey an ideal womanhood, which was intended to authorize and validate women's drive for political power. The U.S. suffrage movement frequently borrowed the motifs used in the British campaign, in addition to deploying images particular to American conditions. This artwork employed a wide array of allegorical characters, art nouveau motifs, and "womanly" types, such as mothers and decorous middle-class women.[4] Although The Masses published a few allegorical figures, most of its suffrage imagery concentrated on anti-suffragists, working-class women, and the "militant" — a controversial signifier of radicalism. To understand the thrust and meanings of such representations, it is necessary to sketch the shifts in mainstream conceptions of woman suffrage, and in particular trace dominant perceptions of "militant" women. Significantly, these changing definitions intensified around 1913, the same year The Masses launched the majority of its suffrage pictures.

Debates about woman suffrage were inextricably linked to issues of American national identity and the nature of social and political reform. Typically both advocates and opponents framed their arguments according to their conception of the possibilities and limitations of U.S. democracy .[5] This aspect of the suffrage argument took on a particular urgency in the years immediately prior to the outbreak of World War I. At this time, Britain's premier suffrage organization, the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), escalated its militancy campaign. News of window smashing, arson, and destruction of property in England was featured prominently in the American press.[6] As a result, the identity of American suffragists was increasingly defined by the ideologies and activities of the British militants. Equivalences and differences between the two campaigns were mobilized to characterize the distinctiveness of U.S. democracy from its English counterpart. This was informed by a residual nineteenth century sense of mistrust and competition between the two nations, and a new awareness of the necessity for cooperation between the two largest Anglo imperialist powers in world affairs. Therefore, discussions of British versus American suffragists' tactics provided Americans (radicals and conservatives alike) with an opportunity to project a new cultural self-image which consisted of an amalgam of isolationist and international values. The New World power was positioned to offer a culturally superior example to the Old World power.

These meanings were constructed across the axis of "femininity". Spoken of as if they were a kind of national accoutrement, "our" American suffragists were praised for conducting a peaceful, "ladylike" campaign that neatly corresponded to respectable codes of female behavior. By contrast, "their" British militants were vilified as the epitome of deviant femininity — wild "furies" with a pathological desire to destroy social harmony that extended well beyond their drive for the ballot. However, comparisons of this kind, made by politicians, journalists, and community leaders, among others, did not necessarily translate into an endorsement for woman suffrage.

The threat of women voters to mainstream patriarchal values still was considered highly disturbing. Rather, to many observers, the conduct and course of these suffrage movements highlighted the state of the two countries' respective social orders. It was implied that the fabric of the British empire was unravelling: its women had gone mad. As Linda Nochlin has noted, "the most potent natural signifier possible for folly and chaos was woman unleashed, self-determined, definitely on top: this was the only image sufficiently destructive of 'normal' power relations, rich enough in negative significations, to indicate the destruction of value itself."[7] Thus the widespread practice of contrasting the American suffrage effort with its transatlantic counterpart underlined how the two nations shared similar but separate problems. Although there was a dominant belief that the United States was experiencing a domestic crisis, it was unafflicted with the degeneracy or "Old World malaise" that, according to popular American assumptions, undermined the British power base.

There are, therefore, three essential reasons why these comparisons were so pervasive. First, by demonstrating that England had lost its ability to regulate the behavior of its women, Americans could distance themselves from the perceived undesirable consequences of running an imperial empire (i.e. England had overextended itself; nobody was watching the homefront). A crucial lesson could be heeded here, especially since Americans sought a means of consolidating their newfound status as a world power, while maintaining a distance from the international conflicts that saw Europe poised on the brink of war. Aware of the wider implications of this tendency, radical groups — most notably the Greenwich Village rebels and a few suffragists — favorably compared militant policies to the ones pioneered by the American revolutionaries. Yet even in this inflection, it was suggested that the U.S. example was unique.

Secondly, it is worth noting that other sources of social upheaval common to both nations, such as labor unrest, were not as regularly singled out for comparative analysis in mainstream discourse. (The radical forces themselves, however, sought to link their cause to international trends for legitimacy purposes.) By concentrating on the construction of difference between the American and British suffrage movements, other disturbing social problems, which could be viewed as destructive to the cultural foundations of an imperial power, would be played down and papered over.

Thirdly, in emphasizing the British militants' deviancy, the threat of similar violent strategies deployed at home could be defused and neutralized. The message that "a smile is quite as good as a weapon as a bludgeon or a bomb" was directed at the WSPU suffragettes, but its meaning was clear for American women.[8] As long as the suffragists conducted themselves appropriately, the vote was at least *possible*. For instance, the 1913 enfranchisement of Illinois women and a defeat in a referendum in Michigan were both attributed to the impact of militancy on the American imagination. (It should be recalled that women were granted the ballot on a state by state basis while at the same time they pressed federal politicians for a constitutional amendment.)

For obvious reasons, American suffragists were not in a position to either too strenuously condone or condemn the actions of the British militants. They did not wish to sever their transatlantic connections, nor did they wish to risk a domestic backlash against woman suffrage. Accordingly, the leading suffrage organization, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), attempted to forge a middle-ground on the issue of militant strategy. For example, at the national convention of 1908, NAWSA adopted a resolution of sympathy for their British "sisters".[9] Here Carrie Chapman Catt employed familiar rhetoric to establish ideological continuity between the two campaigns: "The suffrage campaign in England has become the kind of fanaticism that caused the American Revolution. These women are no longer reformers, they are rebels, and they are going to win."[10] By 1913, however, mainstream suffragists began to divest their vocabulary of revolutionary metaphors. Moreover, realizing that British militancy could undermine the U.S. effort, they increasingly distanced themselves from the suffragettes. Dr. (Reverend) Anna Shaw, the president of NAWSA, informed the American press on numerous occasions that British militancy was an "obstacle to the the extension of the ballot at home."[11] Another prominent suffragist, Alice Stone Blackwell, tried to dispel fears that violent pressure tactics would be adopted by the American movement: "With the cause marching on at this rate by purely peaceful methods, what possible temptation have American women to resort to violence?"[12] Suffragists who voiced favorable views of militant policies were expelled from NAWSA, effectively reinforcing a commonly held belief that militant women were aberrant, and could not be taken seriously.[13]

It was simply not in the suffragists' interest to antagonize public opinion and place the cause in jeopardy at a time when the campaign was gaining momentum. Aside from gains in Illinois and the territory of Alaska, in 1913, suffragists were promised referendums or legislative movement on the issue in nine more states (including New York).[14] Moreover, Congressional hearings on possible constitutional reform to enfranchise women resulted in a favorable recommendation. Among the most successful accomplishments of that year included large suffrage parades held in such major cities as Washington, D.C., New York City, and Baltimore. (As will be discussed further, these parades were meant to demonstrate to the public that an overwhelming number of women "wanted" the vote, and to project a dignified, womanly image of suffragists in general.) This activity prompted an optimistic report from the head of NAWSA's Press Committee:

> There now exists a most remarkable and unprecedented demand for information about suffragists and suffrage events. We are 'news' as we have never been before. Moreover, we are not only amusing and sometimes picturesque but we are of real intellectual and political interest.[15]

However, such successes proved paralyzing to the mainstream suffrage movement. Acting within the parameters of more traditional women's roles, the suffragists avoided any possible taint of radicalism. This strategy aligned the campaign with the period's reformist ideology, where change was advocated through modifying the existing social and political structures. Suffragists reasoned that they would contribute to and benefit from these reforms by virtue of their "natural" desire to improve the general quality of life.[16] It seemed to many that even if women's political gains were not immediate, they were at least forthcoming. Yet, as was pointed out by the Village feminists, defining women's political objectives through traditional notions of proper female conduct was limiting since those roles were themselves limited. Because of the ideology of separate spheres, "ladylike" politics was essentially a contradiction in terms. In this way, mainstream suffrage arguments actually facilitated the colonization of the movement by establishment interests. Lacking ideological maneuvering room, woman suffrage was easily appropriated in mainstream discourse to project an image of the status quo.

On the other side of the coin, the cause was similarly re-worked by the Village rebels to symbolize their own ideological positions. "Woman in Revolt" signified, according to Floyd Dell, "a means of regeneration of the social scheme."[17] Accordingly, the lyrical left identified the woman's movement as a source of radical cultural transformation. Emphasis was placed not merely on female political and economic emancipation, but on a new social freedom for women. Hence the mainstream suffrage movement was criticized as too focused on a single narrow goal. Although female enfranchisement was viewed as an essential first step towards significant changes in women's position in society, it was not perceived as an end in itself. "I think the political arguments for woman suffrage are not the main ones," noted Max Eastman in 1910, while he was secretary of the Men's League for Woman Suffrage. "The great thing to my mind is not that women will improve politics but that politics will develop women."[18] Although members of the lyrical left maintained connections with mainstream suffrage organizations, many expressed impatience with its conventional campaign.

Recalling why he did not participate in New York City's 1911 suffrage parade, Eastman suggested that the cause lacked sufficient challenge

> I do not like parades, and moreover the suffrage movement was getting too fashionable to appeal to that in me which desires to suffer a little in some high cause. Marching with a thousand men [the Men's League for Woman Suffrage]...did not strike me as heroic enough to demand my presence.[19]

Dissatisfied with the cautious and conservative policies espoused by the mainstream suffragists, the Village rebels turned their attention towards the British militants. If the U.S. movement embodied tepid progressivism, the English campaign accommodated the lyrical left's search for "any aggressive blow, any sign of impatience."[20] The editors of The Masses perceived the suffragettes' struggle for the ballot as a thrilling combat against the status quo. They hoped that the British example would inspire the "fashionable" suffragists to inject "life" into their policies. On the surface this tendency seems to be a deliberate inversion of the comparisons between the two movements found in mainstream discourse. In this case it was the militants who offered the culturally superior example and not their more respectable American counterparts. However, those assumptions about femininity which informed mainstream views on the topic remained intact in the radicals' characterizations. For instance, Eastman wondered why $40,000 could be raised by London suffragettes to aid a "fighting campaign" while in America, "it is about all you can do to collect forty cents towards a polite series of parlor meetings." He suggested that this incongruity was odd in a land devoted to the principle of freedom and snidely concluded, "Most of the women in this country would rather be Daughters of an old Revolution than Mothers of a new one. They seem to lack the maternal instinct."[21] Evoking motherhood to describe the revolutionary impulse may have been Eastman's way of rendering conservative claims on respectable femininity ironic. Such commentary, however, did little to challenge equations of femininity with national and political identity, and actually confirmed Woman's status as a sign of the social order. The ideological conjunctions associated with woman suffrage found in mainstream discourse were *re-worked* but not *challenged* by the Village rebels. Like more mainstream observers, they tended to be highly selective in their approach to suffrage issues. Instead of seriously examining the social and historical conditions that distinguished the American and British campaigns, they drew on the suffrage militants to project their own subversive stance. These women essentially functioned as representatives for the lyrical left and its desired cultural transformation.

The discourses surrounding woman suffrage directly impacted on The Masses' production of suffrage imagery and shaped its audience's readings of such pictures. It was no coincidence that most of this work appeared at key junctures in the campaign. As previously discussed, 1913 marked a decisive shift in American perceptions of the movement. That year The Masses published suffrage related pictures in almost every issue.[22] Two years later a special "Women's Citizenship" number was produced to coincide with the (unsuccessful) New York state referendum on woman suffrage. The ballot was finally extended to the women of New York in 1917, the year The Masses published its final round of suffrage illustrations. Thus on one level, the journal's suffrage imagery was deliberately interventionist — working to influence opinion and aid the cause at crucial historical moments in the drive for female enfranchisement. However, the full implications of these pictures extend beyond this strategy of intervention in the campaign itself. Such illustrations were mobilized to expose ideological cracks in both mainstream pro- and anti-suffrage arguments. They were also deployed to challenge the apparently seamless construction of difference between the British militants and their domestic counterparts. This strategy evoked issues of class and definitions of femininity left unaddressed in more mainstream suffrage pictures. In this way, The Masses' suffrage imagery provided a space to attack the status quo at a point when defenders of the status quo had begun to subsume such imagery into familiar categories of proper gender, social, and national identity.

After some initial success, images dealing with woman suffrage published in The Masses could not sustain this subversive stance. Instead of plotting female political power in visual form, the pictures were constructed according to a set of visual codes that reinforced more conventional notions of femininity. This resulted in a body of suffrage imagery that inadvertently circulated stereotypical views on women and their quest for political representation.

(RE)COVERING THE FEMININE IDEAL: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE ON THE COVERS OF THE MASSES IN 1913

In April, 1913, a heated debate erupted at The Masses' monthly editorial meeting over a drawing by Stuart Davis of two lower- class women. Many staff members charged that the picture was unfit for publication. Cartoonist Art Young explained that he had voted against the drawing because "I was older than many of the rebellious artists and had a hang-over of bourgeois taste that I never completely abandoned... ."[23] In the end, however, the camp that favored the picture won the day. But only after the addition of the self-referential caption "Gee, Mag, Think of Us Bein' on a Magazine Cover!" [Fig. 9] was the drawing considered suitable for publication by the majority of staff members.[24] After it appeared on the cover of the June issue, the drawing was widely praised: "the best magazine cover of the year," according to one observer.[25]

Two months later in August, another Masses cover illustration met with similar, though less boisterous, enthusiasm. It is not known if Charles Allen Winter's drawing of an idealized woman, titled The Militant [Fig. 10], encountered any opposition from the magazine's editorial staff. This seems unlikely since John Sloan, who had assumed temporary editorship of the periodical while Eastman was on holiday, had indicated that the time was ripe to put a suffragist on the cover.[26] Evidently Sloan's belief proved correct. The Militant was reprinted in other magazines and the prominent suffragist, Mrs. O.H.P. Belmont, purchased the original for her collection of suffrage-related art work.[27]

Although the two cover illustrations appeared within eight weeks of each other and both received unprecedented acclamation from Village and mainstream commentators, scholars have not drawn any connections between "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant. The drawings are conventionally viewed as dealing with separate subjects. Rebecca Zurier's characterization of "Gee Mag..." as a satire of the "pretty girl" pictures that were so ubiquitous in mass-produced imagery is typical: "It took on political meaning...as a visual affront to the commercial market and hence — by implication — to bourgeois taste, to respectability, and ultimately to capitalism." She also asserts that the image conveys "a sense of individuality" which subverts more mainstream representations of women.[28] Zurier's discussion of The Militant is limited to the observation that the drawing depicts an "ardent suffragist" who represents the more conservative side of the suffrage movement.[29] In her analysis, "Gee, Mag..." combats the status quo while The Militant does not. These conclusions seem to be based on the two pictures' different styles and the artists' depictions of women. Before discussing the covers further, it is useful to consider these differences.

Davis' drawing clearly shows two working-class women — identifiable as such by their coarse features, unstylish hats, and ill-fitting clothes. His treatment of the figures in many ways recalls the loose avant-garde drawing style of Henri Toulouse-Lautrec. The women's necks are elongated; their eyes are beady; the woman on the left possesses grotesquely bulging lips and jaw while her friend is without either lips or a jaw. Both figures appear to have slight protrusions in their necks that resemble a male Adam's apple. This crude appearance is reinforced by Davis' use of heavy cross-hatched marks and thick contour lines. Aside from a single leafless tree in the background, no clue is provided as to the location of the women.

In contrast, Winter's Militant is rendered in the highly finished, polished style associated with academic art and mainstream magazine illustration. The cover also features two female figures. Here an idealized woman, attired in what looks like a classical garment, gestures at an unseen force while seemingly shielding a second "peasant" woman.[30] Several visual clues are provided to suggest the nobility and respectability of the Militant. Her raised arm shares some iconographical affinities with classical renditions of the heroic gesture, repeated in 19th century American art in the guise of orators, politicians, and even the Liberty figure.[31] Furthermore, a wedding band is conspicuously placed on her left hand. Because of the shallow pictorial space, the two figures seem to be fused together, visually uniting them with the medieval castle drawn in line to the far left of the composition. The stagey poses of the women, combined with Winter's use of dramatic lighting and the castle all work to create a narrative removed from the realm of the everyday.

Certainly the differences of style and types of women portrayed informed contemporary readings of the pictures. Viewers realized that the ugly women featured in Davis' drawing stood in marked contrast to the "ideal" women found in Winter's cover, which was typical of in the work of Howard Chandler Christy, James Montgomery Flagg, and Charles Dana Gibson. Eastman would later declare of the cover: "It was realism; it was also revolt."[32] Yet the assertion that the cover served as a critique of the capitalist press does not alone explain the popularity of "Gee Mag...". If the drawing was interpreted as a subversive caricature of "pretty girl" pictures, what does this reveal about viewer expectations of images of women at this time? More precisely, why was the "feminine ideal" seen as ripe for interrogation? Despite its conservative visual vocabulary and somewhat aggrandized subject, The Militant shares at least one important similarity with "Gee Mag...". It too derives its meaning from the idea of the "feminine ideal". In this instance, conventional notions of womanliness are grafted onto what was perceived as its antithesis — militancy. Like Davis' work, this cover seems to question mainstream assumptions about proper female conduct and appearance. (Zurier curiously ignores the title when she describes the picture as simply dealing with the side of the women's movement devoted to "specific legislative reforms."[33]) Given that both covers appeared in the summer of 1913 — when debates about woman suffrage and its corollary, the feminine ideal, reached a pinnacle in the popular press — is it possible that the two images of women are more closely linked than previously thought? An inspection of the critical discourse surrounding the covers and woman suffrage in general indicate that "Gee Mag..." and The Militant mark a nexus between the construction of femininity and the formation of political identity in pictorial form.

Both cover illustrations contain an important subtext of deviant femininity. Davis' picture is perhaps the most explicit. The caption "Gee, Mag, Think of Us Bein' on a Magazine Cover!" underlines that the two women are inappropriate subjects to grace the cover of a magazine. The rough slang of the text further emphasizes the working-class identity of the figures.[34] Presumably the caption was intended to mediate The Masses' audience's understanding of the picture — to allay viewers' potential objections by acknowledging that the editors were already aware of the disturbing nature of the image. At the same time, the declaration implies that Mag and her friend, despite their grotesque appearance, are actually quite appropriate here, if their purpose is to ridicule and hence subvert the more conventional representations of women featured in mainstream cover illustrations.

But is "Gee, Mag..." all that far removed from these more conventional images of women? Zurier's assertion that the crude features of the women express individuality does not account for the fact that Mag and friend fundamentally operate as *types*. Their working-class accoutrements (shabby, unstylish clothing) and their distorted features are signifiers of a category of femininity that stood in opposition to their womanly middle-class counterparts. As Tickner has noted: "Stereotypes are deceptively simple, easily communicated and apparently consensual... . They are to be understood as evaluative concepts held by groups about other groups, most frequently and effectively by dominant groups about marginal groups."[35] The coherency of "Gee Mag..." is based on the unfeminine appearance of the two women. Their angular, coarse faces and the suggestion of a protruding Adam's apple serve to unsex or masculinize them. However, these normally disturbing signs of deviant femininity were not seen as particularly problematic in the context of the Masses' objective to disrupt prevailing visual stereotyupes. In fact, because these female figures denied heterosexual male viewing pleasure, the cover took on connotations of resistance to the status quo.

Mable Dodge's memoir of the period reveals that for many in the Masses circle, the "pretty girl" type was often conflated with that epitome of deviant femininity, the prostitute. Her description of an evening where Masses artists were invited to air their grievances with the art editor of Metropolitan Magazine (which frequently published the work of these artists) aptly captures this sentiment:

> The art editor of the sumptuous Metropolitan Magazine was the one who chose and bought the illustrations for the stories, and who selected covers with pretty girls sufficiently alluring to attract tired business men on street-corner newsstands, where cherry lips and waving curls solicited cheerfully: "Take me home for ten cents!"[36]

The notion of a lascivious exchange is repeated in Maurice Becker's (one of The Masses' artists) angry outburst directed against the Metropolitan art editor:

> Do you know anything about what any of us [artists] think about you and your prostitute of a magazine? Have you any idea *at all* what *we* think of your 'pretty girl' and how we loathe ourselves for selling drawings to go inside your covers? My God! [Dodge's italics][37]

Apparently for the practitioners of American realism the "pretty girl" — essentially a precursor to the modern pin-up — operated as code for all that was wrong with mainstream graphic art.[38] The insinuation that these sexually appealing images of women sold magazines through a kind of prostitution has broader implications. The equation was meant to demonstrate that the capitalist press manipulated its male audience through the commodification and marketing of female sexuality. It exploited the "natural" male sexual impulse by falsely promising the possession of these attractive women. Thus by inference these male spectators were victims of capitalist excess. (The equation of capitalism and sexual solicitation was common in socialist discourse.) Evidently this idea remained with The Masses for some time. In 1917 the magazine published a poem by Seymour Barnard entitled "To a Girl on a Magazine Cover." Because the piece explicitly links capitalist with sexual solicitation it is worth repeating in full:

> You smeared and smirking little
> bag,
> You plump, appealing little brute,
> you,
> Displayed to please when senses flag,
> you little paper prostitute, you:
>
> You seem to fix on us afresh
> Those eyes imploring and unwinking
> Which speak the promptings of the Flesh
> And set some lusty fellow thinking:
>
> And with a pittance for your price
> The lightest laggard may dethrone
> you;
> So little matters it, suffice
> It profits some those men that own
> you!
>
> The men who drew the soul from you
> And left an empty, painted body;
> Who found less profit in the true,
> A ready market for the shoddy:
>
> And to the lure within their snare
> Came gifted youth with all its treas-
> ure,
> And fouled its fairest, freshest ware,
> To sate the tradesmen with the meas-
> ure:
>
> And so, you little clap-trap queen,
> There's scarce a seemly name to suit
> you
> Who might have a Giaconda been,
> You little paper prostitute, you.[39]

Because "Gee Mag..." appeared antithetical to the "pretty girl" illustration, it provided a space to challenge the ideas on which the "pretty girl" was founded. Describing these images of women as "paper prostitutes" symbolized the belief of editors of The Masses that commercial art was "business art". For instance, Eastman commented that the goal of popular magazine art was to "achieve profits in competition. And any or all...genuinely artistic aims are subordinated to that." This fact explained the widespread practice of "manufacturing paper ladies":

> "The Gibson Girl," "The Christy Girl," "The Stanlaws Girl," The Harrison Fisher Girl" — these are features to be advertised on the front cover. ...descend to the imitators — the millions of manufacturers of the girl of the far-away-look — and you find monotony so idealized, entrenched, and confirmed by commercial success, that you cannot characterize their separate styles at all.[40]

The "pretty girl" type, because it was ubiquitous and "monotonous", was representative of the capitalist press' emphasis on conformity, the social significance of which, as perceived by the Village rebels, was to place restraints on the viewing experience. Hence the bourgeoisie could order certain social realities by conditioning audiences to actually demand this "dogmatic" imagery. In this context "Gee Mag..." appeared to subvert the uniformity associated with the "pretty girl" and by extension, assert the qualities of freedom and individuality ascribed to American realism. The success of this type was attributed to the power of capitalism to create demand for "inferior art" which led to the suppression of the "native impulse to be an individual."[41] In this way, the public was seen as being duped by the popular press to think of the "pretty girl" as "art". Years later John Sloan would sadly ask,"Do you think that a popular vote would recognize drawings by cave men as better than the Pretty Girl?"[42]

Since Davis' drawing was essentially mobilized to symbolize the more "authentic" values of American realism (in contrast to the conformist impulse conveyed in more mainstream graphic art), the disturbing associations of the unfeminine appearance of Mag and her friend did not need to be addressed. Instead of dealing with "Gee, Mag..."

as a representation, contemporaries only accounted for what the image was not. For example, when Harper's Weekly reprinted the drawing in September, 1913, Oliver Herford queried, "Will no one catch a Bacillus potent enough to down the epidemic of simpering Femininity that is devastating the land through the medium of magazine covers?" After observing that "Gee, Mag..." had "done nothing to check the plague of pink and white imbecility which continues to smirk and ogle and pout," the writer explained that "in the hope that a second application may prove more efficacious...we are reprinting The Masses' cartoon."[43] An anonymous commentator with the New York Globe seemed unable to identify precisely what the drawing meant, though she or he recognized the subversive nature of the illustration:

> The cover of the June issue, by Stuart Davis, shows two girls' heads, not Gibson Girls, nor Howard Chandler Christy girls, but girls from over Eighth avenue way. And one of them, with a curious and slightly self-conscious look out of the corner of her eye, says to the other: 'Gee,...!" Most cover designs don't mean anything. But this one does.[44]

Two years after "Gee, Mag..." was published in The Masses, Davis exhibited the original drawing at the Salon of American Humorists held at the Folsom Galleries in April, 1915.[45] Although the show was widely reviewed, few critics commented on the picture directly. Perhaps due to the change in viewing context and the elimination of the caption, the drawing seems to have lost much of its former subversive value. For the reviewers who explicitly addressed Davis' work (which included drawings other than "Gee, Mag...") emphasis was placed on the artist's ability to capture human foibles in general. Writing for the socialist New York Call, Emanuel Julius noted that Davis was the heir apparent of the "don't care" school of art. "Davis is not a polite artist: he will never be popular in drawing rooms," wrote Julius "[He] is determined to ridicule people, to show his contempt for them. He is an aristocratic democrat who loves the people merely because they amuse him."[46] Alluding to "Gee, Mag...", The Masses' own commentator characterized the artist's drawings in a similar vein:

> [Davis] sees and feels life with his senses, and his artistic reactions are those terrible, mocking, ironic drawings of his. "The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to be told," says a great poet. Davis doesn't bother about that. He tells it without batting an eyebrow. He puts the wronged, unshapely things in THE MASSES.[47]

In the course of only a couple of years, it appears that the specific reading of the image as a direct attack on the "pretty girl" illustration was either lost or was no longer seen as urgent. Significantly the commentators cited above not only worked for the socialist press, but presumably would have been familiar with the 1913 success of "Gee, Mag..." (indeed, Julius was a friend of Davis'). This fact suggests that the writers deliberately chose not to discuss the drawing as it had been previously characterized. Furthermore, in 1913, praise for "Gee, Mag..." came from the mainstream — albeit liberal — press; in 1915, Davis' work was largely ignored by this sector.[48] These discrepancies indicate that the meanings ascribed to the drawing must be located in conditions specific to 1913. Moreover one may observe that the interpretation of "Gee, Mag..." as a parody of the "pretty girl" seems to have emerged discursively subsequent to its appearance in the early summer of that year. Clearly The Masses artists discussed among themselves their grievances with the capitalist press as symbolized in the "pretty girl" prior to the picture's publication. Yet there is no actual record of this specific equation until *after* the appearance of the cover. Evidently, by the spring of 1913, the time seemed ripe for this argument to be mapped in visual form. Circumstances had shifted so that "Gee, Mag..." was perceived to be both a plausible image of political and social critique, and an unsettling representation of unfeminine women.

The critical discourse surrounding the cover in many respects parallels contemporary discussions about women's changing position in American society. The Progressive era's obsession with ordering feminine identity into categories of either respectability or deviance is particularly apparent in such discourse. Woven through these texts is the language of social reform. For instance, Oliver Herford likened "Gee, Mag..." to medicine. It was unpleasant but necessary to combat the "plague" or "epidemic" of "simpering femininity" that was "devastating" the nation. This characterization is typical of the progressive's belief that the social body could be cleansed of "disease" through the regulation of vice — frequently defined across the axis of female sexuality. The "pretty girl" — perceived as alluring, solicitant, and readily available for male viewing pleasure — was equated with female sexual promiscuity. However, such interpretations did not necessarily mean that this type was seen as a prostitute. It is more likely that the "pretty girl" proved a popular example of the break from nineteenth century notions of morality, described at the time as "The Repeal of Reticence".[49] During the 1910s, young women increasingly challenged the Victorian idea of womanhood where the norm was defined as passive, dependent and intrinsically domestic. As James R. McGovern has demonstrated, these women asserted a new found sense of sexual freedom that cleared the way for the "Flapper" of the 1920s.[50] For mainstream observers, therefore, "Gee, Mag..." worked to reassert those reassuring categories of femininity whose boundaries were steadily being blurred by the New Woman. Although the overt sexuality of the "pretty girl" was intended for male consumption and possession, at this time there was the danger that she alluded to her own sexual autonomy. According to Martha Banta, these types ran the risk of exercising too much 'will' because "Society prefers 'will' to be a male's prerogative, not a woman's."[51] The two unsexual women featured on the cover of The Masses served to make the idea of female sexual emancipation seem ridiculous. When Mag's friend implies that they assume the same sexually appealing function as their more mainstream counterparts, the joke is on *them*. It was a timely reminder that gestures of women's sexual freedom were fundamentally deviant. At the same time, this deviancy was employed to celebrate the Bohemian personae. While appearing to subvert more conventional images of women, the illustration actually reinforces those assumptions about femininity that lead to such visual stereotypes in the first place.

The key to "Gee, Mag..."'s success is its self-referential caption and its appearance in the form of a cover. Such conditions allowed the image to be read as "revolt" but not as an unacceptable threat to mainstream patriarchal values. This may account for why the picture was not discussed when it was exhibited in a different context in 1915. Without the mediating text, the meanings encoded in the drawing are much more ambiguous. Even socialist commentators did not seem able to pinpoint what the drawing was about. They alluded to Davis' rudeness and defiance but did not specifically refer to "Gee, Mag...".

One may speculate on the picture's disturbing qualities. For example, the two women are clearly situated outdoors — as is indicated by the tree in the background — but no other information is provided to help identify their location. Such information would have given crucial visual clues as to the women's social identity. It is not clear whether or not the two women are lower-class prostitutes or simply ghetto inhabitants. Significantly, the Globe acknowledged that the female characters were "from over Eighth Avenue way" — a location in New York City known for attracting streetwalkers.[52] Moreover, the women's coarse features, small eyes, and the large lips of the figure on the left could possibly refer to the racial types associated with America's growing immigrant population. In the absence of further visual clues, it is not certain if the women signify the "exotic Other" or the dangerous, threatening alien. (The latter was popularly viewed as a corrupting force of race "pollution" as a quote from 1910 makes clear: "Shall we defend our American civilization, or lower our flag to the most despicable foreigners — French, Irish, Italians, Jews and Mongolians?"[53]) These ambiguities and alternative readings were held in check by the caption. In this way the text itself served a flexible purpose. If viewers saw anything disquieting in the drawing, the caption would provide The Masses with an escape mechanism. "Do not take this image seriously," is its implicit message, "it is a joke."

Despite the range of possible interpretations of "Gee, Mag...", the picture's deliberate dislocation of the feminine ideal must be connected to debates about femininity which intensified in 1913. The "masculine" features of Mag and her friend correspond to an overwhelming body of anti-suffrage imagery directed against the British militants rather than the American suffragists. Punch (a conservative English magazine of humor) and London newspaper cartoons, which ridiculed the suffragettes as deviant, were widely circulated in the U.S. press. Furthermore, instead of targeting their own women's movement, American caricaturists attacked the British campaign far more frequently. As a result, deviant feminine types — specifically militant women — were increasingly visualized as inherently foreign and inimical to native culture.

The power of these images was acknowledged by the best-selling novelist, Margaret Deland, in her influential 1910 essay outlining the change in the feminine ideal. She declared:

> When I planned to write this paper, I thought I would call it "The New Woman"; but the last page of Puck [the U.S. version of Punch] and the first of Punch, rose before me; ladies in bloomers, with latch-keys, mothers-in-law and club women and Suffragettes, made the title impossible... . Indeed, one can hardly say "The New Woman" with any hope of being taken seriously; although some of us feel that certain conditions of which she is a symptom are serious enough, in all conscience![54]

Deland describes a litany of modern women whose assertion of independence or posture of social responsibility (i.e. matronly mothers-in-law, club women) renders them "amusing". However,the author states that ultimately they are not funny and points to the sobering realities behind the New Woman's quest for emancipation:

> ...if woman has, as she asserts, the power to make human society over, she has at the same time the opportunity to wreck it. A hope always implies a menace. It is neither cowardice nor pessimism then which makes serious-minded men and women say that with the promises and privileges of life, as they are revealing themselves to woman in her discontent and her changing ideals, there is also a danger.[55]

Nowhere was the New Woman's threat to "wreck" society more apparent than in the activities of the British militants. As their violent publicity tactics gained notoriety, American cartoonists utilized a set of visual codes to make them appear mannish and unwomanly. A typical rendition appears in Life (27 March, 1913; reproduced in Banta, p. 17). Here four "militants" are depicted with heavy, coarse facial features that recall the broad, weathered appearance of working-class males. This pictorial strategy underlines the folly of militancy but it also worked as a mechanism of control. Such types could lay no legitimate claim to respectable femininity and, by extension, political power. The suffragettes' unruly appearance, with its connotations of "mob rule", is further emphasized in Boardman Robinson's 1911 cartoon published in the New York Tribune (23 November, 1911). A disheveled young woman, carrying a broken umbrella, addresses her more decorous mother while the family cat arches its back in alarm: The Lady Hoodlums: English Suffragette — "Yes, Mother, we have made a strong impression. They are beginning to realize the dignity of our movement."

The construction of difference between the British and American campaigns is especially pronounced when the two types of suffragists were visually juxtaposed. In these cases, woman's drive for the vote and national identity become intricately linked. Images proliferated that contrasted the ugly, unfeminine British militant with her more womanly American counterpart. For example, a cartoon captioned Woman suffrage campaign methods in England and the United States was published in the American Review of Reviews (March 1913, p. 272) [Fig. 11]. The first panel depicts a mannish militant ,wearing a too short skirt, who furiously attacks a terrified John Bull admidst a litter of gasoline containers. The second panel pictures an attractive, well-dressed woman who gently reasons with a gentlemanly Uncle Sam. An important subtext emerges with the inclusion of these two male national symbols. They demonstrate the strength of the U.S. (Uncle Sam is in control) versus the emasculation of England (John Bull cowers in fear). Here America offers Britain a culturally superior example of femininity *and* masculinity. The cartoon is the visual equivalent of the attitude that prompted a group of male newspaper writers to send a letter to the WSPU's Emmeline

Pankhurst asking "if better results could not be obtained by following the peaceful methods used so successfully by the women of several American states."[56]

In 1913 the idea of a womanly suffragist was relatively new to the American popular imagination. The nineteenth century women's rights movement was treated in caricature with particular viciousness. Such women were portrayed as having questionable morals — they were often shown drinking and smoking — and inclined to wear men's clothing.[57] However, by the early 1910s, these unfeminine types almost exclusively became signs for British militancy. A number of disparate groups joined forces to emphasize the disparities between U.S. and English campaign. This effort was not without precedent. After a lecture tour of the U.S. in 1829, the English reformer Frances Wright was depicted by one American cartoonist as a giant goose "that deserves to be hissed."[58] Such an image would have played on a long history of American Anglophobia. After a number of nineteenth century territorial skirmishes (there was talk of war as recently as 1890), the two nations forged a close alliance early in the new century. There was a sense of shared purpose as advancers of democracy and as the world's two Anglo-imperialist powers. Given this new relationship, it may initially appear odd that Americans stressed the differences between the two suffrage movements — which ultimately connote differences between the nations' political systems. Why did it seem plausible that the womanly U.S. suffragist was the flip side of the unfeminine British militant?

Frequently mainstream discourse surrounding militancy evoked the language of degeneracy. Characterized as "insane" or "mentally deranged", the WSPU suffragettes were viewed as cultivating a dangerous "mob madness". According to one observer "their collective rage is a product and a confession of ignorance, stupidity, inadequacy and failure."[59] Sensationalized accounts of English women's hunger strikes and forced feeding reinforced the notion that militancy led to physical as well as moral decay. After a suffragette named Emily Wilding Davison died on June 8, 1913, as a result of injuries received five days earlier when she attempted to stop the King's horse at Tattenham Corner, these equations took on new urgency. A New York Times editorial is typical of the American response: "[Davison] was a victim of mental derangement who committed a foolish and wicked act no sane person would undertake."[60] Thus on one level militancy signified the unreasonable, hysterical female who demanded her rights like a small child throwing a tantrum. Due to patriarchal assumptions about the possession of women, American males clearly empathized with their English counterparts. At the same time the degeneracy ascribed to militancy came to symbolize the state of England's social order. Often U.S. newspaper accounts related that the WSPU suffragettes were actively enlisting or inciting lower-class females to commit violent acts against the establishment. Such reports implied that all semblance of British social, in addition to gender, identity was breaking down. Evidence of this disintegration was circulated in copious photographs of destroyed property and burned-out buildings. Furthermore, much was made of the WSPU's connections to socialism (though its links to organized labor were severed after 1907). Noting the potential for similar developments in the woman's movement at home, one contemporary asked, "Do we wish a body of women of the tendency and temper of the Socialist and Anarchist added to our electorate, or do we not need more clear thinking and less hysteria in the administration of our country's affairs?"[61] (As will be discussed further, the conflation of militancy and socialism during the period helps one understand the context of The Masses's suffrage imagery.)[62]

The mannish, unfeminine militant — who was frequently depicted as a sexually unappealing older woman — stood not only for social radicalism but also as a product of Old World malaise. By comparison, the American suffragist was portrayed as youthful, dignified, and reasonable. In part the popularity of this representation may be attributed to the efforts of the suffragists themselves. As Glenna Tinnin characterized the visual presentation planned for the March, 1913, suffrage parade in Washington, D.C.: "...it is expected that the complete picture will convey the importance of a new Crusade, having much of the color, picturesqueness, fervor and dramatic interest of the Old plus the spirit of progressiveness, hope, and faith in the ultimate triumph of Right that belongs to the New."[63] Although there were numerous overlaps between the U.S. and British versions, the American spectacles were seen to convey the modern yet womanly character of the domestic drive for female enfranchisement. In this way respectable femininity acquired new connotations in mainstream discourse. The assertion that "women who could organize so remarkable an exhibition could probably know enough to find their way to a voting booth" underlined the culturally superior status of the American suffrage movement.[64] It was equated with such ideologically nuanced ideals as innovation, and the Progressive era's concern for the "New Freedom".

This notion was voiced by the mainstream suffragists. After the 1913 "loss" of Michigan, one suffragist explicitly linked the defeat to the "immorality" of the British militants: "It is the conduct of the militants in England that gave the brewers, the saloons, the political boss, and the allies and hirelings of the political boss a talking point which made the odds against the suffragists too great." Similarly, a victory that same year in Illinois set an "example" for the suffragettes. "This victory may teach the English women the ballot may be won without throwing stones," noted Catharine McCulloch, "We have shown them a peaceful way of getting the vote." As if to reinforce this culturally superior model, Alice Stone Blackwell reminded the readers of her Woman's Journal to "congratulate themselves that they live in the United States and not in Great Britain."[65]

The ideological conjunctions of womanliness and Americanness helped situate the mainstream suffrage movement as defenders of the status quo who sought only to repair the existing system. By stressing the disparities between the two campaigns, it could be demonstrated that the U.S. could accommodate change while England could not. (It should be recalled that during the Progressive era the nation amended its constitution three times, a number only equalled in the Reconstruction and the 1960s.) The country could thereby avoid the social disintegration facing its Old World counterpart. Domestic woman suffrage — its respectable conduct and its forward seeking course — symbolically affirmed the Americans' sense that the new century belonged to them.

Returning to "Gee, Mag...", it is possible to see how the image's interrogation of the feminine ideal was perceived as timely and urgent. This is not to suggest that the picture deals expressly with the woman suffrage movement.[66] However, the symbolic values ascribed to its unfeminine characters merged with broader discourses on the political and national implications of "proper" female behavior and appearance. The acclaim that the cover received could have only been possible in 1913. It is at this point that conventional categories of femininity seemed unfixed — loosened and open to redefinition. This threat to mainstream patriarchal values was effectively neutralized when the woman's suffrage movement was mobilized to reassert familiar notions of womanly conduct. "Gee, Mag..." seemed to lay siege to certain types of images of women while at the same time it maintained reassuring constructions of deviant versus respectable femininity. Its precarious balance between a subversive and more traditional stance with regard to representations of women is intricately tied to women's shifting status in American society.

Max Eastman directly attacked mainstream assumptions about the deviance of militancy in April, 1913. He acknowledged the role national ideology played in the comparisons between the American and British suffrage movements:

> The truth is all the middle-class people [suffragists] in this country are a good deal more worried about their respectability than they are in England. They are always afraid that if they do something, or say something, a little bit out of the way they will lose what they call their positions... . We have actually less liberty of individual action and expression here than they have in those countries where there is an acknowledged system of caste, and everybody's position, be it high or low, is what it is, regardless of anything he may do or say.[67]

The Masses' editor conceded that it was perhaps too much to expect American suffragists to applaud the militants, as long as they did not apologize for their British counterparts. Typical of the lyrical left, Eastman hailed the actions of the WSPU suffragettes for challenging conventional notions of feminine behavior and hence bourgeois morality:

> It is time someone gave something back to the self-righteous preachers of conventional morality, who denounce these martyrs for "petulance" and "unladylike conduct". ...Are you burning up with indignation that such things as window-smashing, and stone-throwing and the destruction of the mail can happen at the hands of civilized women? Then direct the flames of your passion against those smug and respectable tyrants of political power who have driven women to these acts in a fight for what belongs to them, both now and eternally.[68]

For the editors of The Masses, militant women were an exciting combination of both revolutionaries and the "exotic Other". Like mainstream commentators, the lyrical left recognized that these women seemed to pose a greater threat to the status quo than their more "dignified" American counterparts. Radical cultural transformation and militant policy became synonymous. When the British militants were described as "heroes of human liberty" their cause was redirected to signify revolutionary aspirations of the the Village radicals . Instead of focusing on these women's specific struggle for political self-affirmation, the Masses editors mobilized militancy to launch an attack against the "preachers of conventional morality". This characterization curiously overlooked the militant's own emphasis on social and "moral purity" which upheld Victorian notions of female moral superiority.[69] Moreover, militancy was removed from its social and historical context and universalized to symbolize the revolutionary impulse. This tendency is apparent in Eastman's assertion that "Emmeline Pankhurst has not only lit the torch for women, but she has shot full of fire the revolutionary movement of the workers all over the world. The spirit of militant resistance against tyranny is awake. And she more than any other has awakened it."[70]

Given this investment in militant women, it is surprising how infrequently they were actually depicted in *The Masses*' suffrage imagery. While references to the militant strategy of the British suffragettes were not uncommon, this was usually found in captions or accompanying the text. The images themselves, however, usually dealt with American reactions to the militants' activities. For instance, a drawing by Sloan pictures two capitalists attempting to read a damaged letter that details the deaths of laborers due to faulty equipment. Carrying the line, *Damaged Mail: "By Jove, these bloody suffragettes are nothing but common criminals! ...Can you read that, Percy?,"* the picture renders the capitalists' (signifiers of the status quo) outrage ironic. A similar relationship between labor militancy, woman suffrage, and their threat to the establishment is drawn in a sketch by Kenneth Chamberlain. Here two heavyset capitalists smugly condemn woman suffrage for infusing their female employees with a desire to improve working conditions. Riding in the back of a luxurious car, one turns to the other and asks: *"Woman Suffrage? I guess not! Women are too shifty. I'd just got my mills running to suit me, when every damn woman went on strike for shorter hours!"* [Fig. 12]. Another drawing by Maurice Becker shows an impoverished household where a little girl holds up a newspaper headlined "Militancy". After the child inquires what the word means, her mother answers, *"It means if we sit here like this, we'll sit here forever."*[71] These examples indicate how "militancy" carried broader connotations to signify social and political radicalism in general. They also underline that militancy takes place elsewhere; Americans are shown as observers and not participants. Furthermore, in referring to militancy but neglecting to show the militants themselves, an implicit subtext emerges that suggests that there is something unrepresentable about such women.

As Margaret Deland suggested, it seemed impossible in 1910 to depict the New Woman seriously. Any representation that dealt with women's assertions of independence would appear so implausible that it would instantly be a joke. By 1913, viewers were conditioned to expect pictures of militant women to operate in a similar fashion, The idea of the female warrior inhabited the realm of the abstract, taking shape in the guise of Joan of Arc or figures based on Athena and Nike. Such representations — often incorporated into American and British suffrage pageants — were deemed acceptable because they signified the ardor of womanly virtue rather than functioning as a call to arms. Glenna Tinnin explained the suffragists' mobilization of such allegorical characters as demonstrating "the virtues and principles for which women have always stood, and will continue to stand — since they cannot change the nature of their being — are Justice, Charity, Liberty, Peace and Hope."[72] However as a contemporary type, the militant woman was unfeminine and un-American. To depict her otherwise was essentially to remove the signs of her militancy as it was understood in mainstream discourse. Thus establishing a coherent iconography of militancy involved a necessary engagement with the overwhelming body of negative images of the militant woman. As Lisa Tickner has argued, "The difficulty lay in securing this representation of a just crusade, when...[popular] associations pulled in another direction, towards deviance and hysteria."[73] The Masses circumvented this problem by imbuing its pictures of the militant woman with a double signification. While the narratives dealt with woman suffrage, the meanings produced by these images did not always correspond to the historical campaign. They were part of a broader strategy of constructing viable cultural symbols for the lyrical left. As will be discussed below, these symbols defied identification but were still meaningful to mainstream interests.

When Charles Allen Winter's Militant appeared in August, 1913, the American public's appetite for lurid details of the English WSPU campaign seemed insatiable. It is possible that the cover's caption may have been a deliberate attempt to capitalize on the militants' notoriety. Yet the idealized female figure and the stock "peasant" type who accompanies her, defy national identification. This stood in marked contrast to more popular depictions of militants, where great care was taken to emphasize that these women were not Americans. Rather the defining feature of this woman's militancy seems to be class. The character's refined, womanly appearance (her wedding ring underlines her respectability) suggests that she is a middle-class protector of the lower-class woman. Such a representation would have linked up with notions of a modern female chivalry. That is, it was the duty of women to defend other women against a whole litany of vices: white slavers, venereal disease, liquor traffickers — sources of corruption ascribed to men. This idea was elaborated by the vice president of NAWSA in 1911: "Another chivalry is coming into the world besides that felt by a strong man for a beautiful woman. It is that felt by strong women for their weaker and less fortunate sisters. It is the chivalry foreshadowed by Spenser in The Fairie Queene, in Britomart, the noble knight, herself a woman, who rescued Amoretta and devoted herself to the help of all weak and helpless women."[74] Here militancy is characterized according to the ideas that govern respectable womanhood. It is legitimated as the embodiment of such "feminine" qualities such as an obligation to help others, self-sacrifice, and most importantly, a claim to moral authority.

The cover's female figures were the subject of a short essay by Mary Katherine Reely published in The Masses that following October. The essay not only provides an interesting ekphrasis of the picture, it also offers compelling evidence of the magazine's female audience's response to its suffrage imagery. Entitled "The Militant (On the Cover of the Masses)", the piece describes one viewer's effort at deriving meaning from the cover. Reely adopts the voice of a respectable middle-class reader:

> I looked at the picture, casually only, as, by chance, I picked up the magazine. And I wondered, idly, why she was so named — the Militant — she of the gentle face, the sweet mouth, and the quiet eyes.
>
> I turned the pages — I detest such literature. It stirs me up; it riles me; it annoys me! I systematically avoid it. I opened to page 13 and I read. And I turned to 14 and I read on. And I closed the pages in horror and I threw the thing aside — for I detest such literature — I refuse to read it!
>
> But the paper fell front cover up — and again I looked at her face, she of the tender mouth.

> I picked the magazine cover up again — for it fascinated me — though I detest such things — I who love to think only on whatsoever is pure, and holy and of good repute. And I opened to page 9 and I read. And I turned to 10 and I looked long at the double-paged picture. And I went back, deliberately, to the cover and looked at her face — and at the other face in her protecting shadow — and I knew why she was the Militant — she of the quiet eyes, the sweet mouth, and the delicate hands.[75]

Significantly the other items referred to by the author all involve accounts of victimized prostitutes.[76] In particular, Reely singles out a double page drawing by John Sloan entitled The Women's Night Court: Before Her Makers and Her Judge [Fig. 13] This picture depicts the trial of a frail young prostitute surrounded and dominated in court by fourteen disapproving men (the judge, court officers, lawyers, and spectators). The men seem to be leering at the woman, emphasizing that she is somehow in danger. However the threat, it is implied, lies within the legal system itself. In Reely's reading, The Militant's womanliness acts as an uplifting foil to the helplessness of the young prostitute. Moreover, her initial confusion (exaggerated for effect) about the incongruities between the image and the title suggests that she did not expect a representation of a militant to have a "gentle face" or "quiet eyes". It is only upon the author's realization that the woman's militancy fit comfortably into a category of respectable female conduct — as opposed to the popular perception of militants' inherent deviance — that she found the image meaningful.

Unlike "Gee, Mag...", which seemed to appeal almost exclusively to men, The Militant received an enthusiastic response from women. Apparently the cover was brought to the attention of the WSPU's Christabel Pankhurst. A series of congratulatory letters reprinted in October, 1913, includes her endorsement:

> A friend has sent me THE MASSES for August, 1913. It is the first issue I have seen of the paper. I am delighted to see it; not only are the contents most interesting but I admire the whole way in which the paper is reproduced. Mrs. Belmont, with whom I am staying at this moment [in Paris], tells me of the service you do to the Suffrage Cause in America.[77]

The picture was selected to illustrate an article on the British militants by the prominent feminist Edna Kenton, published in the conservative Century in November, 1913. Here Kenton asserted a view that may explain how The Militant was interpreted by the suffrage community. According to the author, militancy must be seen as a new state of mind: "Our concern is not with militant tactics or with its first goal [the vote]. But we are greatly concerned with the militant spirit that is developing in these and many other women. ...This spiritual militancy in women is the ringing, singing note of the world to-day, and what lies back of it and what lies ahead may not wisely be ignored."[78] Years later Dorothy Day, a labor agitator and Village chronicler, would recall the cover in her discussion of a fictional magazine called The Flame.[79]

Evidently The Militant operated as an archetype for a new feminine ideal. Although the imagery is based on familiar codes of respectable womanhood, the title, like "Gee, Mag...", forces the spectator to address the female figures' femininity and reexamine the ideological foundations which govern this construction. The picture's amalgam of womanliness and militancy seemed antithetical to the more common representations of mannish, half-crazed suffragettes. Furthermore, because the illustration draws on womanliness — at this time a signifier of the U.S. suffrage movement — but also deliberately refers to the spirit of the British militants, it dislocates the comforting construction of difference between the two campaigns found in mainstream discourse. This ambiguous national identity is significant. It facilitated readings based on more essentionist definitions of femininity (i.e. selflessness, a desire to protect the helpless, the idea that women are more spiritual than men) which invoked women's "natural" moral superiority. Such interpretations would not have been possible if The Militant appeared to correspond to the stereotype of the British "furies". In this instance, the woman's militancy becomes more abstract and hence more universal. References to a specific campaign, an identifiable suffragist, or a particular historical moment are all absent. Contemporary developments in the British militancy campaign are alluded to only in the title and perhaps by the castle (which reinforces ideas of chivalry). In this way The Militant contains enough information to have been relevant to the cause, but avoids disturbing associations to the historical militants that may have rendered the drawing detrimental to the suffrage effort.

However, The Militant was caught up in the same struggle to claim definitions of femininity for the lyrical left that distinguishes "Gee, Mag...". While on one level the cover counteracted pervasive negative stereotypes of suffragists, it ultimately reinforced ideological notions of "pure" womanhood that had initially led to an investment in these stereotypes. (Suffragists claimed womanliness as evidence of their suitability for the vote. The "antis" argued that politically active women threatened the values ascribed to pure womanhood: the family, the maternal instinct, and the "natural" separation of masculine and feminine spheres.) One may argue that the picture's invocation of the new feminine ideal — in essence a re-worked version of the old — usefully "mainstreamed" the imagery. The cover was coherent and meaningful to groups outside the The Masses' usual coterie, such as non-Village feminists and the audience of Century. In this respect, The Militant proved a flexible cultural symbol. She was at once subversive and conventional, suggesting contemporary woman suffrage movements and yet "timeless" and universal. Nevertheless, the cover, as was the case with "Gee, Mag...", could not effectively bridge the gap between respectable and deviant femininity. In light of the British militants' activities and the momentum of the U.S. suffrage movement, it was considered imperative that images of women corresponded to one category or the other. Too much was at stake for both mainstream and radical interests to allow for any ambiguity of the feminine ideal. Therefore, like "Gee, Mag...", The Militant upheld a familiar and reassuring construction of femininity.

In terms of the imagery itself, these two drawings were linked on many levels to the discourse surrounding the woman suffrage movement. Yet to fully appreciate such connections, one must account for their status as *cover* illustrations. Contemporary discussions of both "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant emphasized their importance as covers. This suggests that this particular viewing context conditioned The Masses' audience to read the images differently than if the pictures had appeared within the body of the magazine.

Indeed a cover itself may be considered a form of representation. Located on the front of a publication, it advertises and sells the magazine, setting up viewer expectations about the contents inside. It assumes a primary function since it may either obfuscate or articulate these contents. Because it is the first element to affect audiences, the cover operates as a shorthand representation for the entire magazine. Furthermore, sold in newsstands, it must compete for attention with a wide range of other cover illustrations that draw on a variety of styles and images. Even if the publication is not purchased, its cover becomes part of a network of public discourse.

Thus the cover itself may have been conceived as a metaphor for "public". Images of women such as the "pretty girl", most commonly occupied this site, presented as objects of display to be possessed within capitalist exchange. Any disruption in this chain of signification would have affected assumptions about the public sphere, which was seen as inherently part of masculine identity. As covers, "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant were inserted into the public domain to project the subversive stance of The Masses and the lyrical left. Perhaps in this viewing context the pictures' apparent questioning of the feminine ideal seemed more pronounced. They may have disrupted, without overtly threatening, the usual images of women seen in public spaces. By extension, they dislodged presumptions that this sphere was exclusively masculine. At the same time the two sets of female imagery affirmed the belief that it was appropriate to present women as objects of display — even those engaged in cultural critique. In this respect, "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant literally "fronted" The Masses' brand of radicalism. The drawings both covered and covered over the new definitions of femininity that emerged in the early 1910s.

It is useful to conclude by noting one particular suffrage picture that was not published on the cover of The Masses. When Sloan indicated that the time was ripe to put a suffragist on the front of the magazine he was not speaking of The Militant. Rather the drawing he had in mind was one of his own. It depicts a suffrage street meeting and was eventually published in October, 1913, with the rather incongruous caption, She's Got the Point: "You'd better be good Jim, or I'll join 'em." [Fig. 14]. In the summer of 1913, Sloan told Eastman that it "would make a good cover (in my opinion) and would be very *different*...[Sloan's italics]."[80] Although the drawing appeared as a full page illustration, it was located well within the body of the magazine on page ten.

One can only speculate whether or not the picture was deemed inappropriate as a cover or if practical considerations did not allow for publication in this location. However, Sloan's own assessment that the image was "very *different*" offers intriguing evidence that the former may have been the case. Unlike "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant, this drawing does not rely on a female type. Instead it depicts an identifiable suffragist (Dolly Sloan, Sloan's first wife) who, in addressing a crowd of mostly men, openly engages in political activity.[81] Moreover, the image contains recognizable references to an historical suffrage organization. Behind Dolly Sloan is a banner that bears the initials W.S.P. (25th A.D., N.Y.). These refer to a district number of the Woman Suffrage Party, one of New York's most powerful suffrage forces.[82] According to Mari Jo Buhle, the party posed tremendous problems for New York City socialists. Its influential position in local suffrage politics and its allegiance with the two-party system, effectively usurped the socialists, who until 1907, dominated the city's suffrage movement.[83] The explicit reference to the W.S.P. may account for Sloan's assertion of the picture's difference. Perhaps The Masses did not use the drawing as a cover because it did not wish to alienate party stalwarts by placing in such a prominent possition what may have been interpreted as an endorsement of a mainstream organization.

However, an alternative explanation lies within the image itself. Here Sloan placed the suffrage orator at the apex of a roughly pyramidal composition. She not only dominates the scene but literally and figuratively rises above the crowd of male spectators. Although most of the men seem transfixed by her speech, a figure in the left foreground whispers an aside to his friend. Furthermore, the lone female spectator in the right foreground who comments to a male companion became the basis for the caption *"You'd Better be good, Jim, or I'll join 'em."* , which was added after the drawing was finished. This text serves to negate the power of the suffragist by rendering the entire demonstration a joke. It is implied that the suffrage movement was directed against men, rather than working for the betterment of women. Because these two characters are closest to the viewer, they act as mediators of the scene. The woman's warning sets up a viewing relationship where suffragists (them) become Others. The caption may, however, have been a typical *Masses* jab at more traditional socialists who would have regarded mainstream suffragists with suspicion. Yet this seems unlikely in light of the magazine's frequent criticism of the conventional suffrage campaign. In any case,the incongruous, even contradictory, text suggests that some of the publication's editors were uncomfortable with the representation. Thus the image was "softened" with the addition of a joke.

Without the amusing caption, the drawing works differently. The suffragist delivers her speech in an urban street — a site of radicalism. She claims the public space and lords over the crowd of male spectators, effectively appropriating their space as well. She is not a passive object of display but an active participant in the political sphere, dominating the composition. In this way, the figure does not fit comfortably into identifiable categories of femininity. Defying more standard images of women, she would have been difficult to claim for the lyrical left. Since she appears to be a street agitator, she was deemed suitable for publication in The Masses. However, in spite of Sloan's wishes, this suffragist was not cover material.

In the final analysis, the success of "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant hinged on this conception of the public site as indicated on the magazine cover. These pictures of women were fused with The Masses itself, serving as ambassadors for the lyrical left. Inserted into the public sphere by appearing as cover illustrations, it seems that contemporary viewers recognized the symbolic value of the drawings. In effect, the two drawings provided a space where conventional definitions of femininity could be contested but not seriously challenged. By 1913 this effort took on urgency. Throughout mainstream discourse, traditional categories of deviant and respectable womanhood were being redistributed and assigned new ideological functions in response to the activities of the British militants and developments in the U.S. suffrage campaign. As women became increasingly prominent in the public sphere, both mainstream and radical forces took up various conceptions of femininity to define their political and national identities. In this respect The Masses mobilized images of seemingly deviant women to signify its subversive stance. But its audience, aware of these fluctuating notions of womanhood, seems to have interpreted this female within reassuringly conventional categories of femininity. Thus for liberal commentators "Gee, Mag..." became a cipher of (male defined) freedom. Suffragists interpreted The Militant as signifying the womanliness of the suffrage campaign — an important justification for seeking the vote. Had the drawings not been presented on the cover, and with mediating captions, it is doubtful that they would have acquired these meanings. Both images relied too heavily on codified female types. Although these codes made "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant coherent, when the drawings were presented in a public context, they assumed new duties.

On one level, therefore, the covers forged an iconography of the public woman, an idea that had seemed impossible only a few years earlier. At the same time, these two images of women became public texts, and as such were liable to manipulation and interpretation by mainstream interests. In this way, the pictures ultimately reinforced those very notions about women's proper social and political roles that The Masses claimed to question.

SUFFRAGE IMAGERY AND SUFFRAGE CAMPAIGNS: "FRESHNESS AND ENERGY PREVAIL"

With the outbreak of war in Europe, The Masses increasingly directed its attention away from domestic issues to concentrate on international concerns. Fearing U.S. intervention in the hostilities, the magazine's editors used every resource at their disposal to persuade their audience of the insidiousness of the war. As a result, the magazine's suffrage pictures were greatly reduced in number. They were supplanted by an overwhelming body of anti-war and anti-military images. Furthermore, the war effectively ended British militancy as the suffragettes mobilized for that nation's war effort. Obviously, the profusion of images engaged with that campaign also abruptly ceased. Although an American brand of militancy emerged in 1914, it never acquired the status of universal bogie the WSPU suffragettes had seen in the early 1910s.[84]

These developments led the magazine to invest differently in suffrage imagery. In 1913 The Masses explored a wide range of suffrage-related debates in visual form, as typified in "Gee, Mag..." and The Militant. However, by 1915 and 1917, these pictures were specifically focused on the New York State campaigns where they assumed politically interventionist roles. The success of this effort varied. Because of its vociferous anti-military stance, by 1916, The Masses was seen by mainstream suffragists as more of a hindrance than a help to their cause. (Interestingly this sentiment parallels the complaints of more conservative party members with regard to the magazine's socialism). For example, NAWSA, which had for years advertised its campaign literature in the magazine, abruptly pulled its notices from The Masses. Moreover, the journal increasingly adopted a strategy wherein it ridiculed anti-suffragists instead of visually defining the suffragists and their programs. For example, three drawings labeled Types of Anti-Suffragists [Fig. 15] by Davis were prominently featured in the special "Woman's Citizenship" issue (November 1915). This tactic may have seemed more expedient due to the demands of a very real political campaign. But even in this instance such representations carried symbolic value. The "antis" embodied the genteel tradition of the nineteenth century, with all of its connotations of repressive morality and restriction of individual freedom. Because the editors of The Masses identified themselves as feminists, they correctly perceived those opposed to woman suffrage as threatening the values of the lyrical left. "The nightmare of anti-suffrage oppresses me," commented Floyd Dell in 1915.[85] Yet an indirect consequence of such an approach was to render suffragists invisible, inviting misinterpretation of those issues at stake for women.

After The Masses launched its attack on the European war, it forfeited much of its "special" Bohemian status. Previously this marginal position had enabled its cultural critiques. Although it had always been controversial, its brand of radicalism, — where the editors emphasized freedom, individuality, and a desire to remove "old systems" — found common ground with Progressive era liberalism. By virtue of its Village connections, The Masses was perceived by progressives as uniquely positioned to offer "feisty" attacks on the establishment, without actually threatening the status quo. However, once its opposition to the war began, the journal lost much of this ideological maneuvering room. As Eastman later recalled, "we became more interested in staying out of war than in overthrowing capitalism."[86] To liberal observers, the magazine seemed too dogmatic for a Bohemian publication and hence became unpalatable.

Moreover, the strain of this new policy resulted in significant defections of staff from The Masses, a loss in the number of financial contributions, and was a leading factor in the notorious Artists' Strike of 1916.[87]

The shifts essentially limited The Masses' ability to produce suffrage pictures that were meaningful outside its decreasing audience constituency. As a result, it tended to invest more in the politically "neutral" representations of women discussed Section I. Furthermore, its position as the leading producer of suffrage imagery among the cultural vanguard was no longer uncontested. Other vanguard groups, such as members of the usually apolitical Stieglitz Group, expressed interest in mobilizing art for woman suffrage. Abraham Walkowitz claimed to have convinced Alfred Stieglitz to exhibit Georgia O'Keeffe's work, since "with woman suffrage and all...it would be a good idea to have a woman on the walls."[88] Mainstream suffragists became more organized in their use of visual imagery in the campaign. Apparently, in either 1915 or 1916, NAWSA formed an Art Publicity Committee, which was primarily aimed at poster production.[89] This competition made The Masses' contributions to the imagery of the campaign seem unexceptional, and perhaps due to the periodical's agitation against the war, such pictures appeared overly partisan.

For instance, when The Masses produced a special "Woman's Citizenship" number to coincide with the 1915 New York referendum, its suffrage imagery was ignored by mainstream commentators. It is possible that this endeavor was usurped by a widely reviewed exhibition held from September 27 to October 17 at the MacBeth Gallery in New York City. Entitled, "Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture by Women Artists for the Woman Suffrage Campaign", the show received favorable notices in the popular press. An examination of this critical discourse provides insight into what contemporary audiences expected of art mobilized for suffrage. It also sheds light on why The Masses' own images, unlike pictures published two years previously, failed to capture the attention of these mainstream groups. However, before examining these two efforts, it is useful to discuss the Masses' practical connections to the woman's movement.

Married to a hard-working suffragist, John Sloan was not only committed to the cause, but also sought to apply his artistic skills to help the campaign. In addition to the suffrage seal of 1915 mentioned in Section I, he was asked to design a banner for a suffrage parade in October, 1910.[90] Aside from suffrage pictures published in The Masses, he contributed similar work to Collier's and Progressive Woman.[91] Diary entries from late in 1908 to 1913, indicate that the artist discussed woman suffrage with his socialist colleagues and various members of the Ashcan school (many of whom were also married to suffragists). A passage dated November 15, 1909, is typical: "Mrs. G[lackens] [Edith Dimock] is for women's suffrage which is growing nearer and nearer each year. I'll just put down *my* belief in the woman's vote *here* in black and white. I know it's bound to be a good thing for the race, and for that reason it will be in line with Socialism."[92] Interestingly, Sloan and Dolly Sloan (who briefly served as The Masses' business manager) promoted The Masses at suffrage parades and meetings. A diary entry dated January 9, 1913, relates that Dolly Sloan had sold issues of the magazine at a suffrage gathering in Brooklyn. Years later the artist would recall selling 78 copies at a suffrage parade.[93]

Max Eastman and Floyd Dell were both well connected to suffrage organizations, which they parlayed into raising funds for the magazine. In December, 1912, Mrs. O.H.P. Belmont contributed two thousand dollars. Other suffragists followed suit, citing The Masses' advocation of women's issues as a key reason behind their financial gifts. (Indeed, as Eastman's memoirs suggest, most of the "rebel rich" that lent the publication financial support were women.)[94] That the magazine was well known in feminist circles is further indicated by an advertisement that appeared in the February, 1916, number. Addressed to The Masses' female audience, it read:

> Will you give Five Dollars or more...to THE MASSES? We ask you to give this as a woman, in appreciation of the eager, intelligent support this magazine has always given to the cause of the modern woman.
>
> In cartoon, in verse, in editorial, in story, THE MASSES has stood for us all along the line as no other magazine in America has. When we fight for suffrage, for economic freedom, for professional opportunities, for scientific sex knowledge, there stands THE MASSES, always understanding, always helping.[95]

Significantly, one of the nation's leading anti-suffragists, Everett P. Wheeler, attacked The Masses for is pro-suffrage stance. Because most negative commentary was directed at the publication's "radical" socialism, this view is an exception. Wheeler, outraged over an issue which focused on religious hypocrisy, vented his anger in a letter to the New York Times:

> ...[I] feel very sorry for Max Eastman, the Secretary of the Men's Suffrage League. In the so-called Christmas number the suffragist and Socialist paper called The Masses, of which he is one of the editors and *owners*, there is a gross caricature of a dinner that the Church Club of this city gave in Oct. to the members of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. ...[W]e are very sorry that Mr. Eastman and his suffragist friends should begrudge us that meal. ...As I thought of these things an explanation of the suffragist movement flashed upon my mind that I venture to suggest to the public. Is it not dyspepsia and its consequent discontent the real, underlying cause of the suffrage movement?...There's no cure for dyspepsia like honest hard work. ...Why, then, will not Max Eastman and his suffragist dyspeptics organize a colony, emigrate to one of the suffragist states, and engage in some productive industry? If they really went honestly to work and earned their own living they would find the dyspepsia disappear; life would present a different aspect, and we honest, hardworking people, who believe in the American system, would be freed from the dark shadow that these pessimists are constantly casting against the sun. [my italics][96]

Evidently Wheeler attributed all of The Masses' objectionable imagery and its un-American stance to its morose obsession with woman suffrage. Unable to separate the magazine and its editors from the woman's movement, he mistakenly referred to Eastman as an owner of The Masses (it was, in fact, a cooperative effort). The negative implications of this association ultimately affected the magazine's investment in suffrage imagery.

The Masses' reputation as a pro-suffrage journal, therefore, was well established in the popular imagination by 1914. It is probable that the journal's suffrage pictures contributed to this distinction. Yet, with the exception of The Militant, it is not known if suffragists favored certain Masses suffrage imagery over others. It seems likely, however, that pictures such as Winter's Susanna at the Ballot Box (March 1913) [Fig. 16] and Becker's sketch of a suffrage parade (July 1913) [Fig. 17] would have appealed to those active in the movement. The former played on the familiar narrative of the biblical Susanna to characterize the righteousness of the suffrage cause. Here the elders discover Susanna, not bathing in a garden, but confidently gazing at an archaic ballot box. Horrified, the magistrates gesture and gasp in shock. Susanna, pictured in a dignified pose, is transformed from the virtuous victim in the original story, to an equally virtuous suffragist, who turns the table on the ill-intentioned elders.

Becker's drawing, on the other hand, explicitly addresses the contemporary campaign. Bearing the caption, "My Dear — Do you know this whole Suffrage movement is nothing but a sex appeal.", the picture gestures to contemporary debates about the purpose of the suffrage parade. Although the vast majority of commentators considered such spectacles socially acceptable, a few anti-suffragists charged that these events shrewdly used "feminine charms" to entice the public into the "pro" camp. For instance, Mrs. Arthur Dodge, president of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, likened these efforts to a coquettish flirtation, where women appealed — in both senses of the word — to men on the basis of a "sex fad". An anonymous observer accused the suffragists of seeking publicity by "making an appeal to voters and the public through parading their prettiest girls and advertising them as such... ." Sensing that the "antis" were on the defensive, the suffragists gleefully pointed to the homely, mannish stereotype of the politically active woman. As one woman put it: "Suffragettes are vastly amused at the findings of Mrs. Dodge and her supporters...when one considers that the suffrage pioneers' leanings toward frumpiness, semi-trousers, and short hair brought the charge that they were only bad carbon copies of females."[97]

Becker's sketch re-works these arguments in visual form. Here a matronly woman and a young female companion observe a suffrage parade from what appears to be a limousine, complete with chauffeur. The younger woman wears a fashionable slit skirt, considered so indecent by some that women were arrested in parts of the country for donning it in public.[98] Oblivious to this, the rotund, sexually unappealing older woman makes a grandiose moral judgement on the passing crowd of suffragists. Her concern for "sex appeal" is rendered doubly absurd because great care has been taken to emphasize that she herself could never have such appeal. (The disturbing implications of this representation for women will be discussed shortly.) Although the image utilizes devices typical of *The Masses*' attempts to ridicule the power of wealthy elites, it cannot be read as a class critique alone. Since it paralleled mainstream suffrage debates, the drawing doubtless would have found an audience outside *The Masses*' usual readership.

However, it is not clear whether or not this would have been the case in 1915. Still smarting from their loss of leadership of New York City's suffrage movement, socialists vowed to out-perform but not compete with their mainstream counterparts in this campaign.[99] Accordingly, *The Masses*' "Woman's Citizenship" issue featured articles, poems, and essays, in addition to illustrations, intended to encourage a "yes" vote.[100] In this sense, the project was united in immediate purpose with the MacBeth Gallery's suffrage exhibition and even NAWSA's posters. Yet this united front between the socialists and their mainstream counterparts was tenuous. A comparison between the two efforts reveals important cracks beneath the surface of this alliance — rifts that would fragment both movements in the following two years.

It is noteworthy that the suffrage exhibition took place at the MacBeth Gallery. The venue is perhaps best known for introducing Robert Henri's American realists, the Eight, to the art world in 1908. This factor alone suggests the *Masses* artists would have been familiar with the show. According to contemporary newspaper accounts, William MacBeth donated the space to the suffragists, who hoped to raise money for the cause through the sale of the artwork. Aside from this practical consideration, the exhibition was meant to demonstrate women's capabilities as artists ("proof" of their competence to vote), and to create a positive impression of the movement as a whole.[101] The effort featured the work of 90 female artists, both amateurs and professionals; most pieces were representative of a conservative, academic styles with a few realist and modernist contributions.[102]

As The Masses "Woman's Citizenship" number hit the city's newsstands, most observers of art and suffrage were preoccupied with the MacBeth Gallery's show. An overwhelming success, the women artists were praised for conveying an "air of confidence, of spontaneity." One reviewer noted: "The occasion has not disturbed their balance, and they have brought to the surface of the cause good sense, tact, taste, self-command, clear vision and reflective power, all desirable qualifications, equally for the artist and the model voter."[103] Several accounts of the exhibition mobilized one phrase in particular to sum up the entire project: "freshness and energy prevail."

With the exception of a painting depicting a suffrage orator (Theresa Bernstein's The Suffrage Meeting), most of the artwork appears to have not dealt explicitly with the details of the campaign itself. Critics commented, with some relief, on the preponderance of images of children, mothers, and other seemingly innocuous subjects, such as landscapes, all suitable subjects for the respectable woman artist. For example, one observer stated that these subjects offered compelling testimony that enfranchised women would not threaten the sanctity of the domestic sphere: "[There is] Not a hint in all these works of denial that woman's place is the best of all places — the home." The impression that these female artists effectively demonstrated their womanliness by utilizing "feminine themes" is typified by this characterization: "The note that is struck repeatedly is on the mother and child theme, which may or may not be an unexpected light on the body of women that is seeking the vote." "The contributors have treated most generously subjects eminently feminine," noted another reviewer, "Motherhood is expressed in various endearing forms. ...Home is woman's refuge and joy as the Suffrage artists paint her. Her champions show her in the sweetest lights. Not a single theme deals with fashion or frivolity." (Fashion and frivolity were terms used to describe women's "natural" frailty. As will be taken up shortly, these equations were meant to demonstrate that women had no interest in the political sphere.) Because the exhibition affirmed notions of proper female conduct and enterprise, the mixture of conservative and a few modernist styles was not seen as overly problematic. After gently chiding the show's organizers for incorporating a "variety of tastes", the writer for the New York Evening Post asked, "Why carp if the cause of democracy in political life can be served by democracy in the arts?" Thus, similar to the discourse surrounding the woman's movement in 1913, respectable femininity and ideals of democracy were linked once again, albeit in a different context.[104]

For the majority of (male) reviewers, who obviously reserved a separate set of evaluative criteria for female artists, these conventional styles and images legitimated the cause. In essence, the suffrage exhibition offered them what they wanted to see: respectable women who would never use the ballot to threaten the status quo. In fact, one spectator happily concluded that this was "not feminist art by any means."[105] Certainly most critics realized the show was different than most art exhibitions. But, since they found nothing disturbingly "feminist" about the artwork itself, the project was interpreted as a spritely demonstration of women's devotion to the suffrage movement, where "freshness and energy" prevailed.

The distinction between "suffragists" and "feminists" was an important theme underlying the campaign of 1915. As discussed in Section I, feminists sought to fundamentally alter woman's unequal status in society. Unlike suffragists, whose objectives did not expressly extend beyond achieving the vote, feminists challenged those assumptions that informed patriarchal values found in every segment of daily life. While not all socialists were feminists, or vice versa, by 1915, the party included among its members some of the nation's most vocal advocates of feminism. The anti-suffragists seized on this affiliation, equating woman suffrage with undesirable radical forces. In fact, during the 1915 campaign, they circulated literature that emphasized these connections.[106]

It is perhaps for these reasons that The Masses' special issue dealt with woman's citizenship by ridiculing those who were opposed to it. Such a strategy could have been adopted to resist the categorization of suffrage imagery as representative of any one suffrage ideology (i.e. either safe or threatening to the status quo). This tendency is particularly pronounced in the critical discourse surrounding the MacBeth Gallery's exhibition. Because the issue appeared concurrently with the show, the magazine's approach was not specifically a reaction to this suffrage exhibition. However, due to the realities of the campaign — in full swing for most of 1915 — the journal's editors may have been aware of the phenomena. Neither wishing to risk a co-optation of its suffrage imagery by mainstream interests, nor to antagonize more conventional suffragists and their socialist counterparts, it directed its scorn at an enemy they all had in common. Accordingly, The Masses attempted to combat anti-suffrage forces by stealing their justifications against female enfranchisement and redirecting those arguments against the "antis" themselves.

This effect is evident in Davis' Types of Anti-Suffragists [Fig. 15]. Published as a double-page illustration, Types features five images of women who, for various reasons, reject the notion that women should be enfranchised. To emphasize that these figures are representative of anti-suffrage generalizations, they have been carefully labelled as *types*. Each drawing is accompanied by a caption that is only meaningful upon comparison with the imagery. For example, the picture on the left depicts a fashionably dressed upper-class woman and a second woman, who appears to be the first's servant. As the second figure wearily scrubs the floor, she is asked by her employer: "We've got other things to do, haven't we, Mary, besides interfere in politics!" The society woman, who dominatingly towers over her working-class counterpart, seems oblivious to the possibility that this second character may not have the luxury of selecting "other things to do."

A similar idea is mobilized in the center drawing. It plays on the notion that anti-suffragists were either prudish old fogies (as seen earlier with Becker's depiction of a suffrage parade) or hopelessly behind the times. Captioned "What do we need with the vote! We can get all we want without it.", the picture also deals with the solipsistic attitudes of upper or middle-class women. One female figure, dressed in heavy crinolines, absurdly assumes an exaggerated pose reminiscent of a fashion model. Her clothing, a vestige of the nineteenth century, signifies that her attitude towards woman suffrage is equally outdated.[107] The other woman is a stout matronly type, a frequently employed sign of female conservatism. The text emphasizes that what these two women achieve without the vote is a regressive adherence to frivolity and prudery.

Finally, the drawing on the right seems to differ from the previous two in terms of equating opposition to suffrage with the upper classes. Here a lugubrious female figure shrugs, "What's the use?". However, because she is situated on a city street and wears a shabby, over-sized hat, she may be identified as belonging to the urban underclass. Appearing to lack the heart to fight for the cause, the character, it is implied, is forever doomed to her powerless, impoverished existence. This meaning is reinforced in the construction of the composition itself. The woman is pushed up against the picture plane, making her seem squashed and immobile. Slightly modernist distortions of perspective tilt up the background, creating the impression that the urban setting surrounds and engulfs the woman.[108]

It should be noted that, these three pictures emphasize certain constructions of femininity that were used by the "antis" as evidence that women were "naturally" unfit to vote. Such constructions include the belief that women were inherently domestic (the first image); the fear that women would impose their prudish morals on the male populace and were excessively preoccupied with fashion (the second drawing); and that lower-class women were doubly ill-suited to political life (the final picture). Ironically, representations of anti-suffragists did not necessarily translate into positive views of woman suffrage. Often this work corresponded to the arguments of the opponents of the cause. Because only the captions and context indicate that these representations of women were not directed against woman suffrage, such imagery inadvertently empowered the "antis". Viewers were asked to contemplate the reasons informing the negative side of the debate rather than more positive arguments. This tactic could have backfired if only because anti-suffragists, by virtue of their presence and the suffragists' absence, are given a disproportionately important place. As Richard Terdiman has observed with regard to Daumier's subversive imagery: "consciousness of the antagonist's power inevitably implies that the practices by which it functions have *already* been internalized to some degree."[109]

One possible explanation for this approach is found in a small notice addressed to suffragists published in this same issue. Here an anonymous writer offers an apology on behalf of The Masses for the harm the magazine may have caused the movement:

> By your enemies, the antis, you are charged with approving of THE MASSES. We know better. THE MASSES approves of you, but you do not approve of us. We are for you to the last ditch, regardless of whether you are for us or not. Suffrage is a thing we can't dicker and haggle about. It belongs to you, and we can't help saying so.
>
> All the same, we are sorry to have you blamed for the things we do. We put on our cover recently a picture of [two crucified men, one black and one white]...
>
> Well, a copy of that magazine has been exhibited by anti-suffragists at Catholic picnics, with the statement that this "blasphemous" magazine is the national organ of the Woman Suffrage Party! This falsehood lost you some Catholic votes. ...If any good Catholic stayed away from [your meetings] because he thought you were responsible for our blasphemy, it was too bad.
>
> Out blasphemies, our ideas, our pictures, are our own. And we can't help it if among them appears insistently this simple fact: Women ought to be citizens and they will.[110]

This passage demonstrates that at this time The Masses was in jeopardy of losing its mainstream suffragist audience. Evidently the "antis"' efforts at discrediting the movement by publicizing its connections to such radical groups as The Masses, was costing the suffragists voter support. Not wishing to provide those forces opposed to the cause with an easy target, the publication divested itself of images of suffragists altogether.[111] Subjecting the "antis" to ridicule may have been the only viable option left to The Masses.

However, the magazine did not exclusively target female anti-suffragists. For instance, a January, 1917, drawing by Maurice Becker depicts a group of men who have congregated in a saloon, apparently to celebrate the suffrage defeats in West Virginia and South Dakota. Entitled, "They Ain't Our Equals Yet!" [Fig. 18], the image corresponds to the most conservative arguments espoused by the mainstream suffragists. The men are rendered as loutish brutes, with coarse facial features and oversized hands. This crude appearance is reinforced in the heavy gestural marks of the sketch technique. They lean out towards the viewer, intruding upon his or her space. Even as they smugly exclaim — in poor English — that women are not yet "their equals", their obvious indulgence in vice stresses that, despite the men's power to vote, they are morally inferior to unenfranchised females. The disturbing subhuman connotations of the men's appearance parallels conservative suffragists' assertions that not all males deserved the ballot. These "questionable" voters included immigrants, blacks, and members of the working class. Paula Hays Harper has identified this problematic argument in terms of imagery. She describes an 1893 composite photograph that shows the American woman (i.e. white, middle-class) and her "political peers": Indians, criminals, congenital idiots, and the mentally insane.[112] Whether it was intentional or not, The Masses reproduced and circulated a suffrage argument that affirmed class and race inequalities. Significantly, the drawing was one of the journal's last suffrage pictures to be reproduced in mainstream suffrage literature, appearing on the cover of the Maryland Suffrage News.[113]

A different approach to the depiction of male anti-suffragists was mobilized by Cornelia Barns, one of *The Masses*' few female artists. Instead of emphasizing these men's moral indecency, Barns, through role reversal, played on claims that women were too preoccupied with trivial concerns to be involved in political affairs. One typical cartoon from March, 1913, portrays a group of foppish, dandified males, who admire a display of coats, hats, and canes in the window of a men's clothing store. Bearing the caption *Anti-Suffrage Argument No. 187: "Women are too frivolous. They think about nothing but styles and fashions"*, the picture suggests that a double-standard exists within anti-suffrage justifications that women were incapable of being interested in important political matters due to their "intrinsic" frivolousness. Anti-suffragists, however, ignored similar traits found in the male population. Presumably arguments one through 186 would have been equally ridiculous.

Barns' play on gender stereotypes elicited this ambivalent response from one *Masses* commentator: "If the Feminists had a vivid sense of Humor, they would make Cornelia Barns a queen and raise a triple crown upon her head. But the Feminists haven't, so we men are safe for a while, God wot."[114] Perhaps the artist's inference that male and female roles were constructed and assigned, as opposed to being innate, was disturbing to *The Masses*' editors. It is possible that for this reason a Barns' drawing, succinctly titled *Voters* [Fig. 19], appeared, not in the "Woman's Citizenship" number, but in the subsequent December edition of the magazine. *Voters* pictures a congregation of men lounging around what seems to be a post or street lamp. The figure to the left is coquettishly posed and daintily smokes a cigarette. Clearly, the image is deliberate inversion of those visual codes usually mobilized to depict lower-class prostitutes. While this reversal of gender roles was commonly found in *Masses*' representations of capitalists portrayed as streetwalkers, Barns in this instance employed the device to undermine male pretensions that only they were "fit" to vote. But, without the comfortable element of class critique, the suggestion of the men's sexual availability and display serves a less definite purpose. Becker's They Ain't Our Equals Yet relies on a set of accoutrements (beer glasses, cigars, a newspaper headline) to pictorially convey the male figures' connections to vice and corruption. Only a minimal amount of props are provided in Barns' image. Rather the figure's associations to female deviance is achieved through the men's passive, alluring poses and their ambiguous setting. Thus they are linked to signs of powerlessness in two ways: first to prostitution; and second to femininity. The picture's amusing qualities pivot on such an absurd equation. Men, the possessors of the vote and all the social and political benefits it carries, are transposed to signify their opposite — women.[115]

While the campaign of 1915 ended in failure, many suffragists would look back on it as a seminal juncture in women's fight for the vote. It set into motion a political machinery "of spectacular display" that would finally lead to victory in 1917. Capturing New York had tremendous symbolic and practical value to the suffragists. As Carrie Chapman Catt asserted: "For fifty years we have been allaying fears, meeting objections, arguing, educating, until today there remains no fears, no objections in connection with the question of woman suffrage that have not been met and answered. The New York campaign may be said to have closed the case. It carried the question forever out of the stage of argument and into the stage of final surrender."[116] Significantly, visual imagery played a key role during this "stage of argument". The MacBeth Gallery's suffrage exhibition appears to have made a convincing case for female enfranchisement. Yet this endorsement was directed at the mainstream of the movement. The Masses' contributions to the pool of suffrage imagery probably did not swing any votes in favor of extending the ballot to women. Realizing that its endorsement of woman suffrage provided fodder for those opposed to the cause, the magazine attempted to subvert anti-suffrage arguments by ridiculing the "antis" themselves. However, even in this case, standardized pictorial conventions for constructing femininity and masculinity remained intact. In this respect, The Masses inadvertently circulated one of the mainstays of anti-suffrage argument: the assumption that the nature of women is inherently different than that of men.

The 1915 campaign would also mark the last time that socialists and mainstream suffragists joined forces to work for the ballot. With the coming of the First World War, the two groups were irreconcilably divided. NAWSA launched a second campaign to disassociate itself from all factions who were opposed to U.S. involvement in the hostilities.[117] The socialists, including The Masses, became so preoccupied in their attacks on the war, that suffrage was pushed onto the back burner. Although the magazine did not cease publishing suffrage imagery, it never assumed the same symbolic value that it had held in 1913 and 1915. As the death knell sounded for The Masses and American socialism in general, plotting female power in visual form may have seemed a luxury only possible in happier days. Ironically, removing these radical connections from woman suffrage contributed in part to its final victory in 1920 with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the constitutional right to vote. Thus, even as some of the most ardent supporters of female enfranchisement were being decimated under the terms of the 1917 Espionage Act, the U.S. Secretary of War was in good conscience able to issue this statement:

> ...what does this war mean to women? War always means to women sorrow and sacrifice and a mission of mercy but one of the large, redeeming hopes of this particular struggle is that it will bring a broadening of liberty to women. This war is waged for democracy. ... One of the things this war is bringing home to us is that men and women are essentially partners in an industrial civilization, and by the end of the war the women will be recognized as partners.[118]

The womanly values of duty, self-sacrifice, and devotion to the state — ascribed to suffrage imagery in 1915 as "freshness and energy" — would indeed prevail.

CONCLUSION

The Masses' suffrage pictures, like its other politically engaged imagery, are not mere reflections or illustrations of the historical campaign of the 1910s. Rather, this work was part of larger, constantly fluctuating patterns of discourse surrounding women's drive for the vote. These drawings played an active, participatory role in such discursive reformulations of femininity, set into motion as the American populace struggled to come to terms with women's increasing prominence in the public sphere. Because debates about female enfranchisement were framed by shifting conceptions of U.S. democracy, representations of suffragists and anti-suffragists acquired symbolic value that extended beyond a topical interest in whether or not to give women the ballot. At stake for mainstream groups and radical factions such as the lyrical left, was the right to define the new social and political directions the nation would take as it emerged from the genteel tradition of the previous century to face the demands of the modern era. Thus the competing ideologies of the Progressive era were often organized and injected into public discourse around the sign of Woman. As is demonstrated in The Masses' suffrage imagery, Woman became a malleable metaphor not only for Americanness and the status quo, but also for the subversive stance on which the Village rebels grounded their political identity.

The Masses only partially developed an iconography of the politically active woman. This is seen in a few examples from 1913, such as Winter's, The Militant, and Sloan's, She's Got the Point. Yet the success of new visual strategies for depicting the public woman was uneven. Images like Davis', "Gee, Mag...", and even The Militant, asserted familiar categories of femininity which essentially buttressed women's claim to political power. That the editors of the magazine themselves may have been uncomfortable with these representations of women — despite their investment in feminism — is suggested in their selection of suffrage imagery deployed in the

"Woman's Citizenship" issue of 1915. Amidst a heated campaign, they did not risk losing voter support for the cause by explicitly challenging cherished mainstream values of womanliness and female respectability. Instead, the publication chose to subject the anti-suffragists to ridicule, oblivious to the fact that in doing so it was to some extent actually circulating the arguments of those opposed to extending the ballot to women. After women were guaranteed the franchise in 1920, and the lyrical left was replaced by the U.S. version of communism, the battle for female equality took on new dimensions. The single, fixed political goal that defined the women's movement in the 1910s was absent in the 1920s. It would be approximately forty years before women would regroup in sufficient numbers to apply significant political pressure to change their status in American society. In the meantime — ironically, for a magazine devoted to criticizing capitalism — the heir to The Masses' images of the public woman would be that compelling icon of consumerism: the Flapper.

NOTES

1. In addition to their Masses articles on the merits of woman suffrage, Floyd Dell and Max Eastman published key contributions to the campaign elsewhere. See for example, Eastman's pamphlets Is Woman Suffrage Important? (New York: Men's League for Woman Suffrage, 1912) and Woman Suffrage and Sentiment (New York: Equal Franchise Society, 1913). Dell's series of biographical sketches of notable contemporary women (including Emmeline Pankhurst and Isadora Duncan) written in 1912 for the Friday Literary Review were published as Women as World Builders: Studies in Modern Feminism (Chicago: Forbes, 1913). The Village feminists explored women's status in American society in a variety of ways. See Susan Glaspell, The Glory of the Conquered (1909) and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Herland (1979); and Mary Heaton Vorse's The Hearts Country (1914). For an analysis of this work see Leslie Fishbein, Rebels in Bohemia: The Radicals of The Masses (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, (1982) and June Sochen, The New Woman: Feminism in Greenwich Village, 1910-1920 (New York: Quadrangle, 1972). For a collection of poetry related to woman suffrage see Genevieve Taggard (ed), May Days: An Anthology of Verse From "Masses–Liberator" (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925). Even Mabel Dodge penned verse for the woman's movement. For instance:

   > Melt, You Woman!
   > Melt to August — grow ON and Ripen
   > Give Yourselves Up!
   > That is the only way to be Alive,
   > That is what you want, isn't it?
   > To be alive?
   > Life lies in The Change,
   > Try it and See.

   Cited in Arthur Frank Wertheim, The New York Little Renaissance (New York: New York University Press, 1976):91.

2. The British suffrage campaign mobilized artwork for the cause in a variety of poster, postcards, broadsheets, prints, and popular illustrations. Unlike their American counterparts, who would not organize committees devoted to the production of suffrage artwork until the mid-1910s, the suffragettes established the Artists Suffrage League in 1907; and the Suffrage Atelier was formed in 1909 by British artists wishing to use art to help the cause. The former was part of the moderate, reformed-minded organization, the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. The more militant Women's Social and Political Union also utilized visual imagery as a campaign tactic. Lisa Tickner's The Spectacle of Women (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988) is the most comprehensive study of this project. See also Paula Harper, "Suffrage Posters," Spare Rib no. 41 (November 1975):9-13, and "Votes for Women: A Graphic Episode in the Battle of the Sexes," in Henry A. Millon and Linda Nochlin (eds), Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1978).

3. Although scholars have ignored this work, I have run across several contemporary references to suffragist art. For example, Ethel Myers, who was a sculptor affiliated with American realism, is known to have executed maquettes depicting suffragists. An undated press clipping (c. 1912) from the New York Press notes: "Mrs. Myers has made studies of a 'Suffragette' with books under her right arm, her left arm in a militant pose and wearing a broad-brimmed hat with particularly aggressive-looking hatpins of enormous size." (Ethel Myer Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.). The January, 1912, cover of Progressive Woman reproduces a sculpture by Ella Buchanan entitled The Suffragette Arousing Her Sisters (date unknown). An accompanying description (p. 10) characterizes the piece as follows: "On our cover this month is a cut of the beautiful suffragette piece modeled by Ella Buchanan. ...In front of the suffragette is Vanity. Prostrate and clinging to Vanity's skirts is Prostitution. The drooping figure is Conventionality and the Wage Worker clings to the hand of the Suffragette." It is not known if the artist provided this reading or if it is an interpretation for the benefit of Progressive Woman's largely socialist audience. Certainly this description indicates that allegorical readings of suffrage imagery were expected, which further suggests it was affiliated with academic modes of representation. Moreover, images such as those produced by Walter Crane, would have conditioned socialist audiences to be comfortable with such references to "high" (i.e. bourgeois) artwork. Another Buchanan piece was featured on the cover of this same publication in October, 1912. A similar description of this sculpture reads: "The figure on our cover this month is from a statuette by Ella Buchanan, and is called Captivity's Captive. It represents a woman tied on a heap of money bags, the whole thing resting on a silver dollar. In the socialist movement we speak of woman as "the slave of the slave" — meaning that the woman is the greatest sufferer under the capitalist system. Miss Buchanan has very strikingly reproduced this idea in her [work]." (p. 9).

   In addition to Buchanan's sculpture, Progressive Woman published a number of suffrage-related pictures. Readers were encouraged to circulate these illustrations to advance the cause of women and socialism. For instance, the February, 1913, number contains this suggestion: "You will want our attractive artistic posters to boost THE PROGRESSIVE WOMAN: 500,000 Socialist women votes in 1916 . ...A quantity of them has been mailed to [Socialist Party] State Secretary. Write to him or to her for some of these posters. Place them prominently upon the walls of your lecture halls and club rooms. They'll look good on any wall." For further discussions of Progressive Woman see Joseph Conlin (ed), The American Radical Press 1880-1960 (Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood, 1974) and Aileen Kraditor, The Radical Persuasion, 1890-1917 (Baton Rogue and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

4. See Tickner, pp. 151-226. Tickner briefly discusses the differences between the American and British utilization of imagery in Appendix 7, pp. 266-267. American suffragists sold a few British posters through the National American Woman Suffrage Association. When a faction of suffragists founded a militant organization of their own (the Women's Political Union) they adopted the Artists Suffrage League's poster entitled The Bugler Girl (reproduced in Tickner, plate VIII) for their own purposes. Recently Jean Fagan Yellin has observed this image's connections to residual abolitionist ideologies, still meaningful early in the twentieth century. The discourse surrounding this nineteenth century movement frequently mobilized a vocabulary based on heraldry or the "Bugle-call to women." See Jean Fagan Yellin, Women and

Sisters: The Antislavery Feminists in American Culture (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989):172. Suffrage imagery that is specific to American society often drew both negatively and positively on the idea of the Negro vote.

5. For a thorough analysis of suffragist ideologies and their relationship to Progressive era thought see Aileen Kraditor, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965).

6. Led by Emmeline Pankhurst, the WSPU waged a militant campaign to draw publicity to the cause of female enfranchisement. Frustrated by government inaction on this matter, the militants believed that desperate circumstances called for drastic action. The cause of English militancy is too complicated to detail here. However, it is useful to note certain events of 1913 to better understand the American reaction to the activities of the WSPU suffragettes. (It appears that the mainstream press ignored the more peaceful tactics of the NUWSS.) After the British government removed female enfranchisement bills from Parliament's consideration early in 1913, the WSPU was enraged. Arrested for violent sabotage to private property, these women often went on hunger strikes as form of protest. To avoid embarrassment, the British government assembled a legislative package wherein hunger strikers could be released from prison to recover and then later reincarcerated. Known as the "Cat and Mouse Act", this cruel treatment became a focal point of suffragette concern. Believing themselves to be martyrs for a higher, moral crusade, they launched a campaign of guerilla warfare, mobilizing a litany of military metaphors in their literature and imagery.

7. Linda Nochlin, "Women, Art, and Power," in *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988):24.

8. "Two Feminine Campaigns," *Independent* 74 (10 April 1913):797.

9. Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*. vol. 5 (New York: Arno & the New York Times, 1969):238.

10. Address to NAWSA's national convention of 1908, in *Ibid*., p. 241.

11. Variously ascribed. See *New York Times* (17 May 1913) and "The Women's Demonstration," *Independent* (8 May 1913):1011.

12. Letter to the editor, *New York Times* (18 May 1913).

13. American suffragists Alice Paul and Lucy Burns were inspired by the militant policies espoused by the WSPU. After they recommended to NAWSA the adoption of similar campaign techniques in 1914, they were asked to leave that organization (see Harper, p. 422). They formed the National Woman's Party, which was in existence until 1919. Advocating heckling of political figures, hunger-striking, and public demonstrations, their brand of "militancy" never matched its British example in terms of publicity and escalation of violent tactics in general. Significantly, *The Masses* would endorse the NWP in late 1917. A picture depicting one of their demonstrations is found in *The Masses* 9 (October 1917):17. At this time *The Masses* may have identified with the NWP because both were targeted for prosecution under the terms of the Espionage Act of 1917.

14. These states were Nevada, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Ohio, Nebraska, Missouri, New York, and Pennsylvania. States that had already granted women the

right to vote were Washington, California, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and Kansas. The fact that these all lay west of the Mississippi was not lost on contemporary observers. Suffragists attributed this tendency to the frontier's fostering of innovations to U.S. democracy. "Antis", however, used it as evidence of the "natural" unrefined nature of politically active women. For instance, a writer to the New York Times stated, "...every [state that has woman suffrage] is in the weird and wooly west. ...Woman suffrage has been adopted only by the crude, raw, half-formed commonwealths of the sagebrush and the windy plains whence have come in endless procession foolish and fanatical politics and policies for a generation or two." New York Times (7 May 1913).

15. Elinor Byrns quoted in Harper, p. 368.

16. This connection to the Progressive era reformist impulse is further discussed in Kraditor, Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, pp. 43-74.

17. Floyd Dell, Intellectual Vagabondage (New York: Dorlan, 1926):136.

18. Eastman's speech to NAWSA's national convention of 1910 is quoted in full in Harper, p. 285.

19. Max Eastman, Enjoyment of Living (New York: Harper & Bros., 1948):351.

20. Randolph Bourne cited in Edward Abrahams, The Lyrical Left (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986):48.

21. Eastman, "Knowledge and Revolution," Masses 4 (April 1913):5. The editor is of course referring to the right-wing organization, the Daughters of the American Revolution.

22. These issues of The Masses and the pages in which suffrage pictures are located include: (January 1913):14, 20; (March 1913):12, 20; (April 1913):6, 17; (May 1913):7; July 1913):15; (August 1913):cover; (October 1913):7, 10; (December 1913):19.

23. Art Young, On My Way: Being the Book of Art Young in Text and Pictures (New York: Horace and Liveright, 1928):287. Masses editorial meetings frequently involved collective decisions with regard to the captioning of imagery. The battle of April, 1913, is typical of the magazine's staff meetings. For an amusing account of these gatherings see Rebecca Zurier, Art for the Masses. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988):46-51. The problems of collective editorship, art, and radicalism is summarized by the anarchist author, Hippolyte Havel's outburst: "Bourgeois Pigs! Voting! Voting on poetry! Poetry is something from the soul. You can't vote on poetry!" Since Havel also served as an editor of Emma Goldman's Mother Earth, he was asked about the decision-making process of his own. "Sure, sure", he replied, "We anarchists make decisions. But we don't abide by them!" (cited in Ibid., pp. 50-51).

24. An account of this particular meeting is provided in Ibid. p. 49. Sloan would later state that the caption was his idea. Helen Farr Sloan verbatim notes, John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.

25. Franklin P. Adams of the New York World quoted in Diane Kelder (ed), Stuart Davis (New York: Praeger, 1971):22. A collection of critical commentary about this

cover is found in Stuart Davis Scrapbooks, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

26. Letter reprinted in Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 551.

27. Unattributed note in John Sloan Collection; according to an anonymous newspaper article, "Mrs. O.H.P. Belmont [while in London] purchased a large selection of photographs of militant suffragettes and of campaign posters...for [NAWSA?] political headquarters in New York." New York Times (1 May 1913).

28. Zurier, p. 139; p. 202, n. 44.

29. Ibid., p. 99. See also Martha Banta, Imaging American Women (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987):81.

30. Interestingly, neither Zurier or Banta acknowledge the presence of a second woman in this picture.

31. Jean Fagan Yellin makes connections between nineteenth century feminism, the classical *ad locutio* gesture, and Hiram Powers' sculpture of America or Liberty (1848-1850) in "Caps and Chains: The Iconography of Powers' America," American Quarterly 38 (Winter 1986):798-826.

32. Eastman, Enjoyment of Living, p. 413.

33. Zurier, p. 99.

34. References to Davis' picture, made long after 1913, often refer to the women as "Hoboken girls". Hoboken, New Jersey, was a favorite haunt of Davis', and was known for its large working-class population. See note 32. It is possible that contemporary audiences in 1913 could have viewed Mag and friend as residents of Hoboken, but I have not encountered any such references. This subsequent identification is interesting. Did Hoboken have particular symbolic value or romantic associations of a by-gone era? Were female members of the working class from Hoboken different than their counterparts found in, say, the lower East Side?

35. Tickner, p. 172.

36. Mabel Dodge, Movers and Shakers (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1936):85.

37. Ibid., p. 87.

38. Zurier discusses the "pretty girl" as a foil for American realism, p. 41.

39. Seymour Barnard, "To a Girl on a Magazine Cover," Masses 9 (January 1917):3. The relationship between prostitution and the practices of the capitalist press is found in Art Young's, The Freedom of the Press, Masses 4 (December 1912):10-11. This double-page cartoon depicts male journalistic staff as running a brothel, in which "Madam Editor" accepts payment from Big Advertisers. Lounging in the background are her "girls": the scantily clad Editorial Writer, Reporter, City Editor, Managing Editor, and Cartoonist. Since the nineteenth century, socialist theory had asserted that the capitalist system's inherent economic exploitation of the lower classes was responsible for the inception and maintenance of prostitution. The suggestion that

capitalists would degrade themselves for money — become prostitutes — was probably developed from these "official" socialist concerns about prostitution. A study of representations of prostitutes in Victorian Britain is found in Lynda Nead, Myths of Sexuality (London: Basil Blackwell, 1988). The enduring nature of comparisons between prostitution and capitalism is evidenced in the enormously popular film of 1990, Pretty Woman.

40. Eastman, "What's Wrong with Magazine Art?" Masses 6 (January 1915):12, 14. See also, "The Magazine From the Inside," Bookman 41 (May 1915):251-260. Here James Montgomery Flagg is described as having "a Standard Oil, copper-rivetted monopoly on magazine illustration."

41. Ibid., p. 12.

42. Helen Farr Sloan verbatim notes, John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.

43. Oliver Hereford, "Pen and Inklings," Harper's Weekly 58 (6 September 1913):28.

44. New York Globe (24 May 1913).

45. Early in 1915, Louis Baury, the art critic for Bookman published an article entitled "Wanted: An American Salon of Humourists," in which Baury suggested that a new kind of art exhibition was needed to remedy the high-minded seriousness of the American art world. Alluding to the growth of modernism in America and World War I, he argued that humorous artwork was genuinely American because "a sense of humour is as much a standard national institution as George Washington's truthfulness or Bunker Hill or true democracy... ." Bookman 41 (January 1915):526. The show which followed included several Masses artists and members of the Ashcan school. These included: John Sloan, Art Young, Glenn O. Coleman, George Bellows, Henry Glintenkamp, Cornelia Barns, Maurice Becker, Kenneth Chamberlain, Boardman Robinson, Randall Davey, Ethel Myers, William Glackens, and Robert Henri. According to reviews of this collection, commentators appeared disappointed that the overwhelming body of socially conscious realist work was not *funny*. This observation from the Evening Post is typical, "...taking the group as a whole, the humor expressed is of a broad kind, often brutal, occasionally coarse and very seldom of a subtle or delicate sort." New York Evening Post (17 April 1915).

46. Emmanuel Julius, "Humor in American Art," New York Call Sunday Magazine (2 May 1915).

47. Edmond McKenna, "Art and Humor," Masses 6 (June 1915):11.

48. Reviews are available in Stuart Davis Scrapbooks, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

49. Agnes Repplier, "The Repeal of Reticence," Atlantic Monthly 110 (March 1914):297-304.

50. James R. McGovern, "The American Woman's Pre-World War I Freedom in Manners and Morals," Journal of American History 55 (September 1968):315-333.

51. Banta, p. 48.

52. Suzanne L. Kinser, "Prostitutes in the Art of John Sloan," Prospects 9 (1984):234. I have encountered only one reading of Mag and friend as representations of prostitutes, and even this is ambivalent. Carl Zigrosser said of the cover: "...as a travesty on the 'pretty girl' magazine covers by Gibson, Christy, or Harrison Fisher, The Masses offered Stuart Davis's cover design of two working girls (or were they prostitutes?) with a caption 'Gee, Mag...'. Not only was it an admirable drawing, it also was sane and amusing propaganda." Carl Zigrosser, The Masses, 1913-1917, unpublished typescript in collection of Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware, p. 5 or p. 153.

53. This 1910 quotation is cited in Egal Feldman, "Prostitution, the Alien Woman and the Progressive Imagination, 1910-1915," American Quarterly 19 (Summer 1967):195.

54. Margaret Deland, "The Change in the Feminine Ideal," Atlantic Monthly 105 (March 1910):289.

55. Ibid., p. 290.

56. Woman's Journal 44 (22 March 1913):92. Pankhurst's response is reprinted on the same page.

57. A discussion and selection of nineteenth century anti-suffrage imagery is found in Frank Weitenkampf, "Notes on Woman in American Caricature," American Collector 15 (July 1946):6-7; 18.

58. The print by James Akin is captioned, A Downwright Gabbler or a Goose that Deserves to be Hissed. It is reproduced in Jean Fagan Yellin, "Caps and Chains....." p. 803.

59. "The Way of Impotence and Rage," Independent 74 (10 April 1913):792.

60. "The Folly of the Militants," New York Times (10 June 1913).

61. Letter to the editor, New York Times (22 April 1913).

62. As Tickner has argued, the "hysterical" woman carried a double signification. On one hand she was marginalized as excessively feminine. Hysteria was equated early in the twentieth century with women's "natural" friability and used as evidence by anti-suffragists that women lacked reason, or logic and hence were unsuitable to vote. On the other hand, hysteria was also a cipher of social chaos. See Tickner, pp. 192-205. For a discussion of militancy as a kind of feminist spirituality, see Martha Vicinus, "Male Space and Women's Bodies: The English Suffrage Movement," in Women in Culture and Politics, Judith Friedlander et al. (eds) (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986):209-222.

63. Woman's Journal 44 (11 January 1913):15.

64. "The Women's Demonstration," Independent 74 (8 May 1913):1011.

65. Detroit Times (17 May 1913); "The Suffrage Conquest of Illinois," Literary Digest 46 (28 June 1913):1409; Woman's Journal 44 (8 February 1913):45.

66. Davis, however, addressed women's drive for the ballot on at least one occasion. A pen and ink study of a small suffrage demonstration, entitled, Suffragettes, is in the collection of Mrs. Stuart Davis. It is reproduced in City Life Illustrated, 1890-1940, (Wilmington, Delaware: Delaware Art Museum, 1980).

67. Eastman, "Knowledge and Revolution," Masses 4 (April 1913):5-6.

68. Ibid., p. 6.

69. A seminal aspect of WSPU ideology centered on the notion that the male sphere was corrupt and a source of degradation for women. Christabel Pankhurst charged that almost all Englishmen suffered from venereal disease; women had no recourse but to reject the male physical world altogether. Hence the slogan: "Votes for Women — Chastity for Men!" The notions of female moral superiority and bodily sacrifice informing the British militants' actions is discussed in Vicinus, op. cit.

70. Eastman, "Knowledge and Revolution," Masses 4 (June 1913):5.

71. The drawings were published in The Masses 4 (April 1913):6; and 5 (March 1914):9.

72. Woman's Journal 44 (15 February 1913):50.

73. Tickner, p. 205. cf. n. 62.

74. Harper, p. 312.

75. Mary Katherine Reely, "The Militant," Masses 5 (October 1913):18. I have been unable to determine the identity of Reely, or whether or not she was a mainstream suffragist or a socialist. As is discussed shortly, it appears that the picture was circulated in suffragist circles, which suggests that the author was the former.

76. Frank T. Shay, "The Machine: Commonplace Tragedy in One Act of Three Scenes"; and Charles de Garis, "She Never Left Home". The former is a short play in which a young prostitute is unfairly treated by the criminal justice system. The latter is a doctor's account of a young prostitute's discovery that she has syphilis. Aside from these pieces on prostitution, one other item in this issue deals with women's issues. See a poem by Upton Sinclair entitled, "The Double Standard — A Parable of the Ages", p. 7.

77. Masses 5 (October 1913):3. Pankhurst may be referring to the items cited in note 76 that deal with male victimization of prostitutes. Given her concern for "social purity", these pieces could have seemed "most interesting". Because The Militant was the only suffrage picture published in the August number, it is probable that her endorsement refers to the cover as well.

78. Edna Kenton, "The Militant Women — and Women," Century 87 (November 1913):15. The Militant is reproduced on p. 14. Eastman described Kenton as "my good friend". She wrote a number of articles on feminism (see Section I, note 112) and was a member of Heterdoxy, an alternative New York City feminist group.

79. Dorothy Day. The Eleventh Virgin (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1924):177. Cited in Zurier, p. 198, n. 42. I was unable to obtain a copy of this book to include in my study.

80. Correspondence reprinted in Eastman, *Enjoyment of Living*, p. 551.

81. Patricia Hills identifies the figure as Dolly Sloan. See Patricia Hills, "John Sloan's Images of Working-class Women... ." *Prospects* 5 (1980):157-196. A conversation with Helen Farr Sloan in January, 1990, confirmed that woman is a portrait of Sloan's first wife. Mrs. Sloan also expressed doubts that the artist would have approved of the caption. I am grateful to Mrs. Sloan for her comment.

82. Entries in John Sloan's diary indicate that Dolly Sloan strenuously worked for both the Woman Suffrage Party and the socialist women's organization, Woman's National Committee. See John Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene*, Bruce St. John (ed) (New York: Harper and Row, 1965):424; 426; 442; and 613. Conflict between the WSP and its socialist counterpart is outlined in a passage dated 26 March, 1912: "Dolly went to [the] Woman's Committee meeting in the evening. A vote of three to two decided that they would not accept the invitation of the Women's Suffrage party (sic) to parade with them. Idiots!" (p. 613).

83. Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870–1920* (Chicago and Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981):225. According to Buhle, the WSP had 20,000 members in 1907 and 500,000 by 1917.

84. American militancy was limited to the NWP, see note 13.

85. Floyd Dell, "Adventures in Anti-Land," *Masses* 6 (November 1915):6. Presumably Dell would have acknowledged that anti-suffrage also oppressed *women.*

86. Eastman, *Enjoyment of Living*, p. 545.

87. The Artists Strike of 1916 was grounded in artists' protests that incongruous captions were being applied to their work. This claim was not unjustified. An examination of *Masses* graphics from 1914 to 1916, reveals that pictures frequently had little to do with the accompanying line of text. Often this text referred to the war. Good examples are found in *Masses* 6 (5 June 1915):28; and *Masses* 8 (February 1916):19. Here Stuart Davis' images of working-class figures are given the titles *"Mother, It's the Cossaks"*, and *Patriotism — According to Wilson's Messages*, respectively. The best account of the Artists' Strike is in Eastman, *Enjoyment of Living*, pp. 548–559.

88. Abram Lerner and Bartlett Cowdrey, "A Tape-Recorded Interview with Abraham Walkowitz," *Journal of the Archives of American Art* 9 (January 1969):15. Alfred Stieglitz, the avant-garde photographer, was an evangelical proponent of modernism and was responsible for introducing contemporary European artistic developments to a small American audience through his gallery, 291, and his publication, *Camera Work*. Georgia O'Keeffe subscribed to *The Masses* and was a member of the NWP. She was one of American's first practitioners of modernism and would achieve fame in the 1920s for her large, close-up views of flowers.

89. Harper, p. 493.

90. Letter to Dolly Sloan, dated 8 or 9 September, 1910. In the John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.

91. Sloan illustrations accompanied Mary Alder Hopkins, "Women March," *Collier's* 49 (18 May 1912):13; and "In My Name! After Nineteen Hundred Years," *Progressive Woman* 4 (December 1910):5. Copies of *Progressive Woman* were in the possession of the Sloans and are currently deposited in the John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.

92. John Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene*, 352. See also pp. 268, 424, 425, 426, 432, 442, 613, and 631.

93. *Ibid*., p. 631; Helen Farr Sloan verbatim notes, John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.

94. Eastman, *Enjoyment of Living*, pp. 403–404; 457. Floyd Dell would refer later to these contributions from the "rebel rich" as "a sort of skeleton in our proletarian revolutionary closet." Floyd Dell, "Memories of the Old Masses," *American Mercury* 68 (April 1949):485-486. According to Eastman's memoirs, some female patrons of *The Masses* included: Betty Hare, Alice Duer Miller, Elizabeth Scripps, Mrs. Kate Crane Gartz, and Alice Barnsdall. Barnsdall sent the magazine a check for five thousand dollars, citing its stance against the war as the reason for her donation.

95. Advertisement signed Alice Carpenter, Zona Gale, Marie Jenney Howe, Anna Strunsky Walling, Vira Boarman Whitehouse in *Masses* 8 (February 1916):2. Howe was the founder of Heterdoxy.

96. Everett P. Wheeler, letter to the *New York Times*, reprinted in *Masses* 5 (February 1914):2. The caricature he refers to is *Their Last Supper*, by Maurice Becker, published in *Masses* 5 (December 1913):4. The picture depicts fat, gluttonous churchgoers who greedily indulge in a feast while ignoring an emaciated Christ figure who hangs above their heads. Wheeler was the head of the New York Men's Anti-Suffrage League. In 1914, John Dos Passos, the novelist, filed a Wheeler brief with the Senate Judiciary Committee on Woman Suffrage. It stated that enfranchised women would be converted into "beasts" (Harper, p. 438).

97. Mrs. Arthur Dodge, quoted in the *New York Times* (12 May 1913); letter to the editor, *New York Times* (3 May 1913); and letter to the editor, *New York Times* (17 May 1913). For a discussion of how fashion was used to signify categories of femininity in the British campaign, see Katrina Rolley, "Fashion, Femininity and the Fight For the Vote," *Art History* 13 (March 1990):47-71.

98. McGovern, p. 331.

99. For an account of socialist participation in the 1915 campaign, see Buhle, pp. 232-236.

100. The illustrations are: Stuart Davis, [Woman Riding the Subway], cover; M.A. Kempf, *Atlas, Mere Man*, p. 4; Art Young, *Who's Afraid?*, p. 7; Glenn O. Coleman, *Overheard on Hester Street*, p. 10; John Barber, *Election Day*, p. 11; Stuart Davis, *Types of Anti-Suffragists*, p. 15; Elizabeth Grieg, *"Look at that Suffragette..."*, p. 19; Kenneth Chamberlain, *Woman's Sphere*, p. 28. Scrawled in the background of Grieg's drawing are the words, "Votes Women 1915".

101. Newspaper clippings are deposited in the MacBeth Gallery File, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. All reviews cited here are from this source. The show was organized by Mrs. John Alexander, Mrs. Albert Herler, Abastenia St. Leger Eberle, Ida Proper, Alice Wright Morgan, and Anne Goldthwaite.

102. Modernist contributions are by Katherine Dreier, Anne Estelle Rice, and Alice Wright Morgan. Realist work is by Theresa Bernstein, Abstenia St. Leger Eberle, Ethel Myers, Edith Dimock, and Janet Scudder. Prominent women illustrators also exhibited work: Anne Goldthwaite, May Wilson Preston (who had illustrated Alice Duer Miller's 1915 pamphlet, *How it Feels to be the Husband of a Suffragette*), and Rose O'Neil. The exhibition catalogue, which lists the artists in full, is located in the MacBeth Gallery Files.

103. *American Art News* (2 October 1915); *New York World* (3 October 1915).

104. *New York Evening Sun* (28 September 1915); *Christian Science Monitor* (2 October 1915); *New York World* (3 October 1915); *New York Evening Post* (9 October 1915). Bernstein's *The Suffrage Meeting* depicts a lone suffragist who speaks at night to a crowd of lower-class people. The reviews that acknowledged the painting cited it as the one negative example in the exhibition. For example, the reviewer for the *New York Press* singled out this work as the only one "concerned with propaganda." Presumably for the writer, depictions of the suffragists themselves — especially if they were executed in a realist style — referred too explicitly to the campaign to be considered "Art".

105. *Brooklyn Eagle* (28 September 1915).

106. Cited in Kraditor, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement*, p. 32. After New York finally voted to enfranchise women in 1917, the "antis" bitterly attributed the victory to the socialists. NAWSA most ardently refuted this. See Harper, p. 584.

107. For a discussion of this visual strategy of making the "antis" appear out-dated, see Tickner p. 190.

108. It is possible that Davis' modernist distortions of space are due to the impact of the Armory Show of 1913. Davis would become America's premier abstract painter in the 1930s, and later attributed his interest in modernism to the exhibition. However it seems more likely that the particular modernist conventions seen in this instance are derived from the work of Henri Toulouse-Lautrec. The French artist typically tilted up the background in his studies of cabarets to make the figures appear cropped. The unusual angles and distortions of perspective that emerged in his work had the effect of including the viewer in the picture. That Davis borrowed such pictorial devices is evidenced in *Jersey City Portrait*, discussed in Section I. [cf. Fig.4].

109. Richard Terdiman, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth Century France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985):184.

110. "To Suffragists," Masses 7 (November 1915):19. The cover referred to depicts an event of 1915 when a southern Jew named Leo Frank was lynched in Georgia. Rendered by Robert Minor, it is titled, In Georgia: The Southern Man Demonstrates His Superiority, and was published on the cover, Masses 6 (August 1915).

111. Only one picture published in this edition depicts a suffragist. It is Glenn O. Coleman's Overheard on Hester Street, which shows a refined suffrage canvasser being berated by a coarse lower-class woman. Aside from representations of anti-suffragists, the other illustrations feature more "neutral" subjects such as globes, or a gathering of people on the street. Only their captions situate them within suffrage debates.

112. Paula Hays Harper, "Votes for Women?" op. cit., p. 157. The image is reproduced on p. 159. For an analysis of the racist overtones informing much suffrage argument, see Kraditor, Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, *passim.*

113. Zurier, p. 194, n. 110.

114. Edward McKenna, "Art and Humor", p.11.

115. A similar drawing by Barns, captioned, Waiting for Commissions, appeared in Masses 9 (July 1917):38. cf. n. 29.

116. Quoted in Harper, p. 517.

117. Horrified at anti-suffragist charges that it was fostering radicals such as the socialists NAWSA devised a series of charts, literature, and press releases to demonstrate that such groups did not have a significant role in either the organization or in any of its victories in state elections. For a discussion of this campaign of disassociation, see Buhle, pp. 235-238; and Harper, p. 537. It is perhaps a legacy of this effort that Harper's comprehensive six volume history of the U.S. suffrage movement only cites the socialists' contributions to the campaign on nine occasions.

118. U. S. Secretary of War, Newton G. Baker's address to NAWSA's national convention of 1917 quoted in full in Ibid., pp. 532-533.

EPILOGUE

It is perhaps a testament to The Masses' investment in images of women that I have been able to deal with only a relatively small number of these pictures. After the magazine changed editorship in December, 1912, representations of women were featured in every issue until its demise in 1917. Of these, approximately twenty-seven appeared on the front cover. I have examined the various ways this female imagery worked as cultural symbols for the lyrical left, how they were laden with complex and contradictory layers of meaning, and why they were mobilized to signify this group's re-working of both socialist and suffragist ideologies. However, a final question remains. Given its interest in drawings *of* women, why are there so few Masses graphics rendered *by* women?[1] Certainly The Masses had strong connections to Greenwich Village's feminist community, many of whom worked in the literary sphere. Nor were feminists of this era silent on cultural issues. If only a small number of women worked for The Masses, it is not because women lacked interest in radical causes or did not exist in sufficient numbers as artists.

One possible reason for this discrepancy was suggested indirectly by Djuna Barnes, an intrepid chronicler of New York's Bohemia. Writing of a matronly woman she calls "Madame Bronx", who wanders the Village in search of "women and men who sit on the curb quoting poetry to the policemen," Barnes describes the following encounter:

> Finally, Madam Bronx could stand it no longer. "Are you an artist?" she inquired of a red-haired woman who had somehow forgotten to cut her hair.
>
> The red-haired woman smiled; a twinkle came into her eye. "No," she answered, "I am a pamphleteer."[2]

The women of this community who defied conventions of ideal womanhood with their alternative lifestyles and involvement in politics were apparently uncomfortable with the idea of Artist as defined by the male members of the lyrical left. In this instance, the social roles of the artist and the revolutionary were inseparable. Such notions were organized around masculine qualities of strength, domination, and individuality. It was tacitly assumed that only the male artist was in a position powerful enough to bring about radical cultural transformation. Women, on the other hand, served as muses for this cultural renewal. Discussing the literary work of Village feminists, Leslie Fishbein has convincingly argued that women, such as Susan Glaspell, Mary Heaton Vorse, Louise Bryant, and Neith Boyce, expressed doubts that females were capable of producing "great art."[3] The men of the lyrical left staked their political identity on an almost mythical conception of the artist; the women, however, turned to other recourses. They were political agitators, active suffragists, organizers of socialism, and advocates for new definitions of women's place in American society. In short, they were Barnes' pamphleteers. As Floyd Dell would recall in 1926:

> Perhaps there was not so very much fun in being a modern woman after all. And perhaps it was *our* fault.
>
> When [the Village feminists] succeeded at last in making these thoughts articulate, when they battered down our glorious long-term generalizations with immediate prosaic facts — when this happened, our masculine feminism began, sadly, to part company with theirs.
>
> ...They went off by themselves, in Women's Clubs from which we felt hurt to find ourselves excluded, to plot votes for women, factory legislation, and equal pay for equal work.[4]

It was perhaps this separation of revolutionary duties that facilitated women's appropriation as flexible cultural symbols in the graphics of The Masses.

American socialism of the 1910s, in existence before the Russian Revolution, is frequently referred to as the left's adolescence. Aside from its negative connotations of child-like play, this metaphor aptly characterizes the development of American social realism. In may ways, The Masses forged an iconography of leftist critique that set a precedent for similarly engaged imagery of the 1920s and 1930s. Certainly the work of William Gropper, Ben Shahn, Marion Greenwood, and the artists of the John Reed Club, owed a debt to The Masses. Other prominent left-wing artists of this later period, such as Hugo Gellert, Adolf Dehn, and Boardman Robinson all had contributed drawings to the magazine. (Still others, like Robert "Fighting Bob" Minor, who had been one of The Masses' most prolific artists, gave up artistic production altogether in favor of "total dedication" to the revolutionary cause. Sloan distanced himself from the publication and Stuart Davis gained fame as America's premier modernist in the 1930s. Charles Allen Winter would settle into undeserved obscurity.) The "hard left" artists of later years would not abandon images of women. But during the twenties and the Depression era, political and social circumstances had shifted so that they never carried the symbolic value found in the lyrical left's investment in representations of women. It would be the idealized male laborer who would serve as a focal point for the iconography of social realism.

In the final analysis, The Masses' sublimation of Woman as a sign for a host of revolutionary concerns contributed to this tendency. Its images of women mapped out an inherently contradictory strategy for the depiction of women in leftist politically engaged artwork. While women were physically present in The Masses' body of illustrations, their own political and social perspectives were decidedly absent. Thus this imagery was literally and figuratively drawing on women.

NOTES

1. The only female artists listed as *Masses* art editors were Alice Beach Winter and Cornelia Barns. Little is known of these two women and their professional careers. Brief biographical sketches of each is provided in Zurier, p. 175 and p. 182. For Alice Beach Winter see also the Winter collection in the Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware; and Winter papers in the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. A list of women who contributed at least one drawing to the magazine from 1911 to 1917 includes: Marjorie Hood, Harriet Ollcott, Mary Ellen Sigsbee, Elizabeth Greig. Djuna Barnes, Josephine Nivison, Mary Gruening, Dorothy Fuller, Jeanne Stevens, Louise Bryant, and Ethel Plummer.

2. Djuna Barnes, "Becoming Intimate with the Bohemians," *New York Morning Telegraph Sunday Magazine* (November, 1916). Reprinted in Djuna Barnes, *New York* (London: Virago, 1990):237-238; 238-240.

3. Leslie Fishbein, *Rebels in Bohemia*, pp. 127-159.

4. Floyd Dell, *Intellectual Vagabondage*, pp. 141-142.

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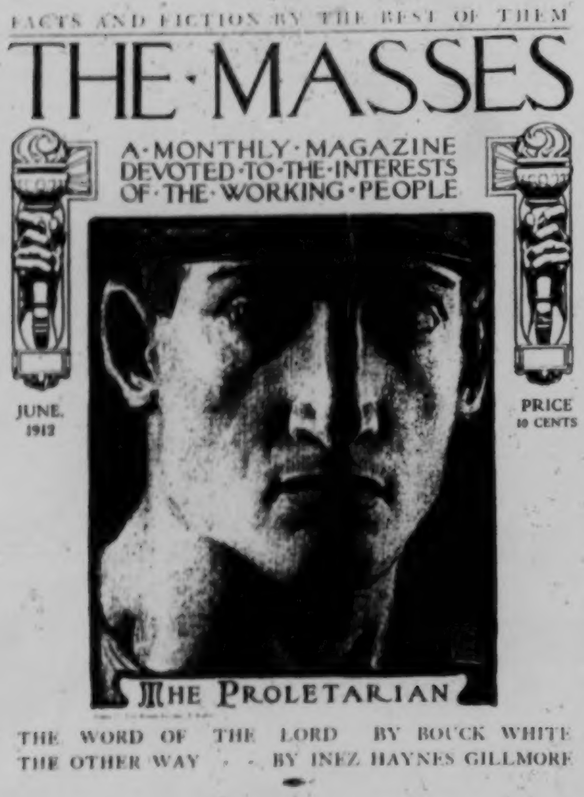
FIGURES



FACTS AND FICTION BY THE BEST OF THEM

THE·MASSES

A·MONTHLY·MAGAZINE
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OF·THE·WORKING·PEOPLE

JUNE.
1912

PRICE
10 CENTS

THE PROLETARIAN

THE WORD OF THE LORD BY BOUCK WHITE
THE OTHER WAY - - BY INEZ HAYNES GILLMORE

FIGURE 1.

Charles Allen Winter, The Proletarian,

The Masses 3 (June 1912), Cover

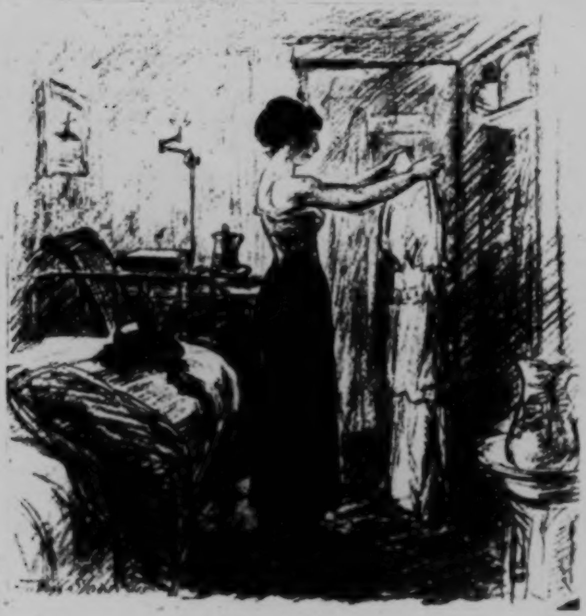

FIGURE 2.

John Sloan, The Bachelor Girl, 1915.

Original drawing, charcoal and wash on paper, 33.7 cm. X 32.8 cm.
Published in The Masses 6 (February 1915), p. 7.
The Art Institute of Chicago, Olivia Shaler Swan Memorial Fund 1941.826.
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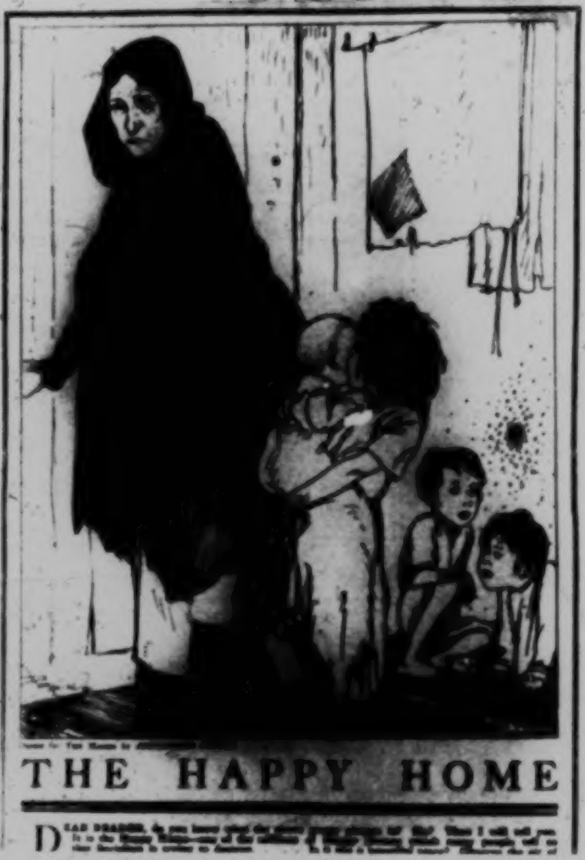
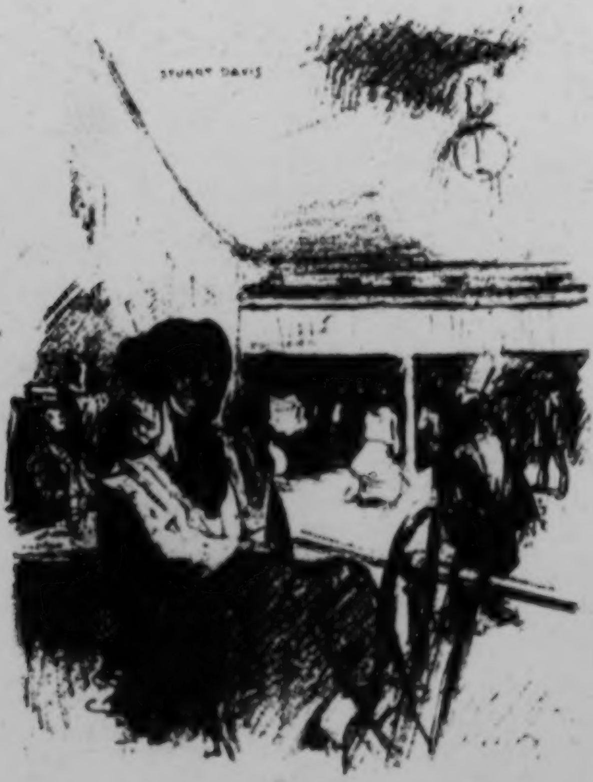

THE HAPPY HOME

FIGURE 3.

Alexander Popini, The Happy Home,

The Masses 3 (May 1912), frontispiece, p. 4



STUART DAVIS

FIGURE 4.

Stuart Davis. Jersey City Portrait.

The Masses 6 (July 1915), p. 10

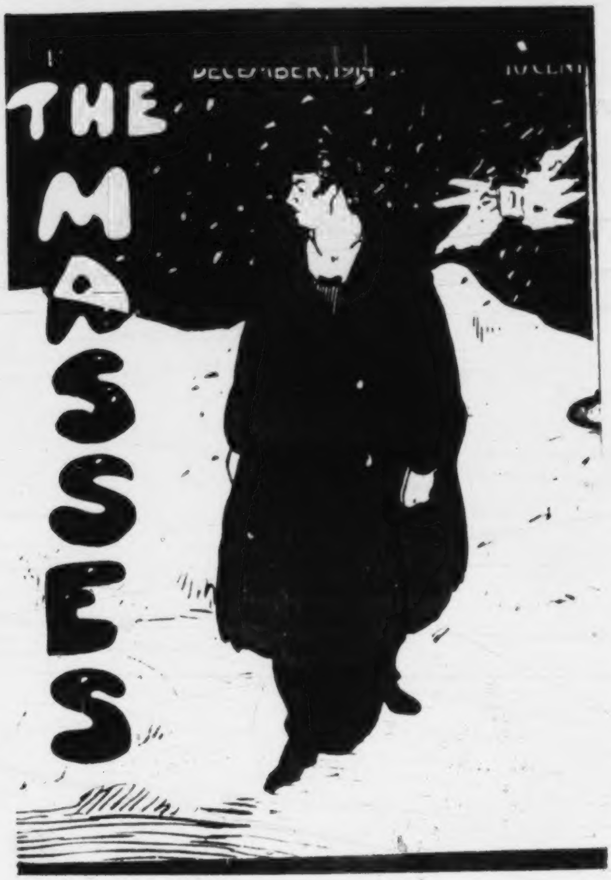

DECEMBER, 1914
THE
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FIGURE 5.

Stuart Davis, Untitled ["Wandering Woman"]

The Masses 6 (December 1914). Cover

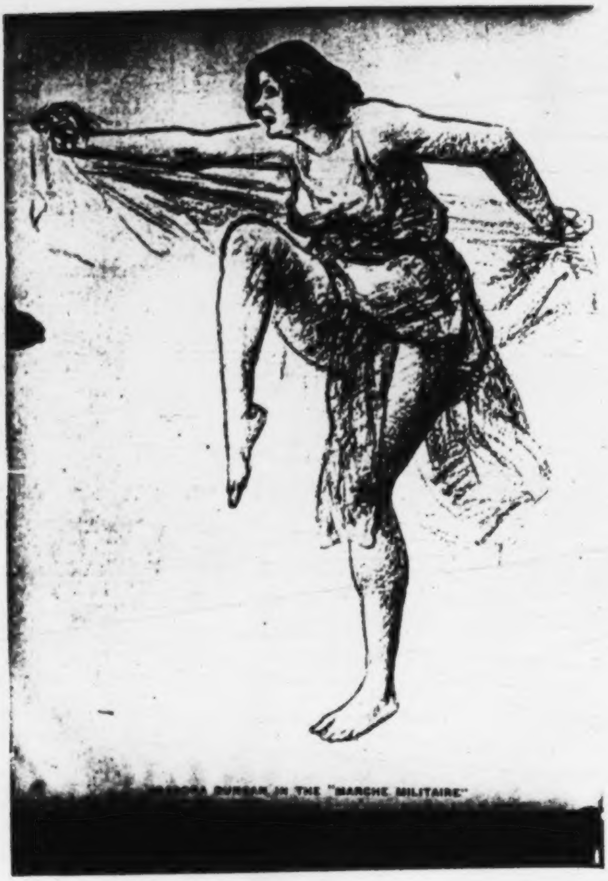

ISADORA DUNCAN IN THE "MARCHE MILITAIRE"

FIGURE 6.

John Sloan, Isadora Duncan in the "Marche Militaire",

The Masses 6 (May 1915), p. 24. Back Cover

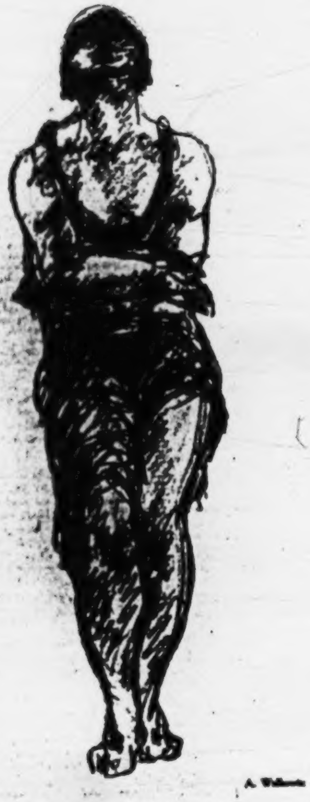


FIGURE 7.

Abraham Walkowitz, Untitled [Isadora Duncan],

The Masses 9 (September 1917), frontispiece, p. 4

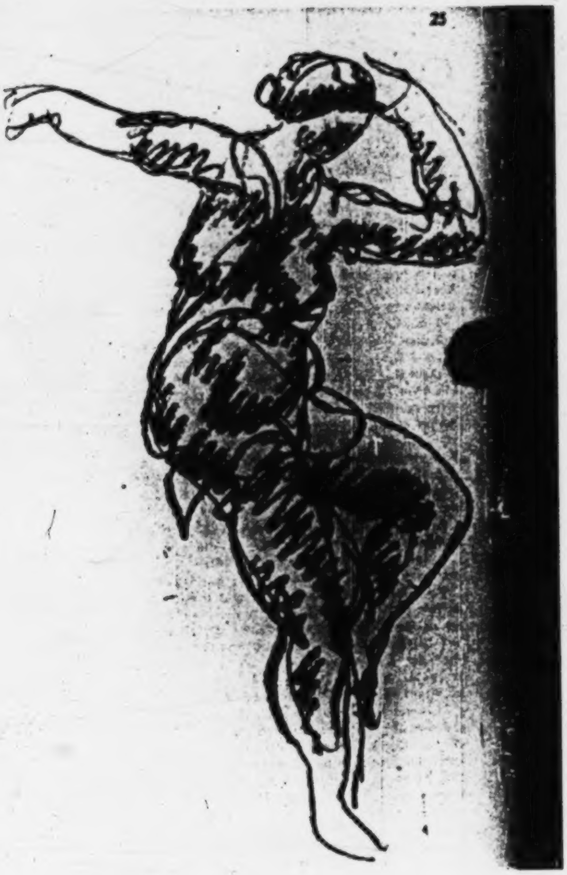


FIGURE 8.

Abraham Walkowitz, Untitled [Isadora Duncan],

The Masses 9 (September 1917), p. 25

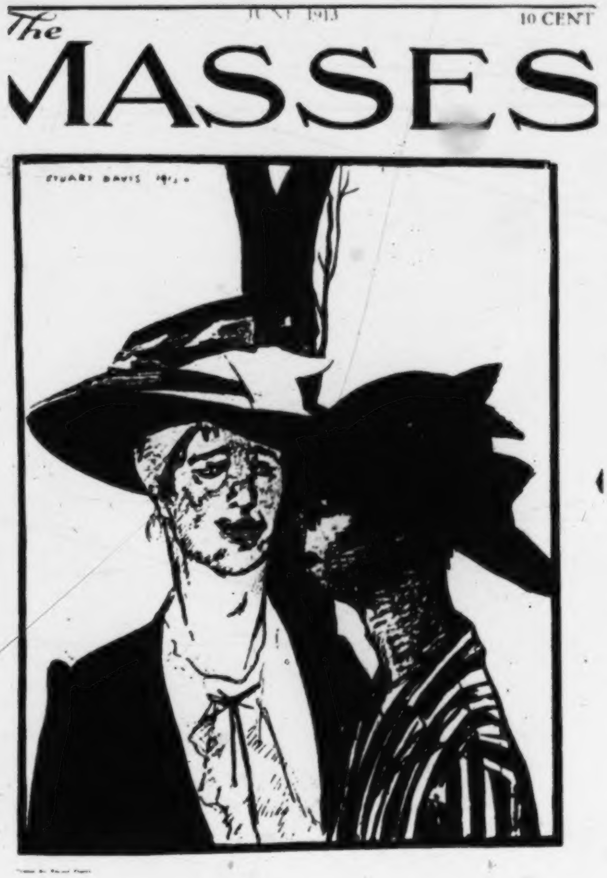

JUNE 1913
10 CENTS
The MASSES
STUART DAVIS 1913

FIGURE 9.

Stuart Davis, "Gee, Mag, Think of Us Bein' on a Magazine Cover!",

The Masses 4 (June 1913), Cover

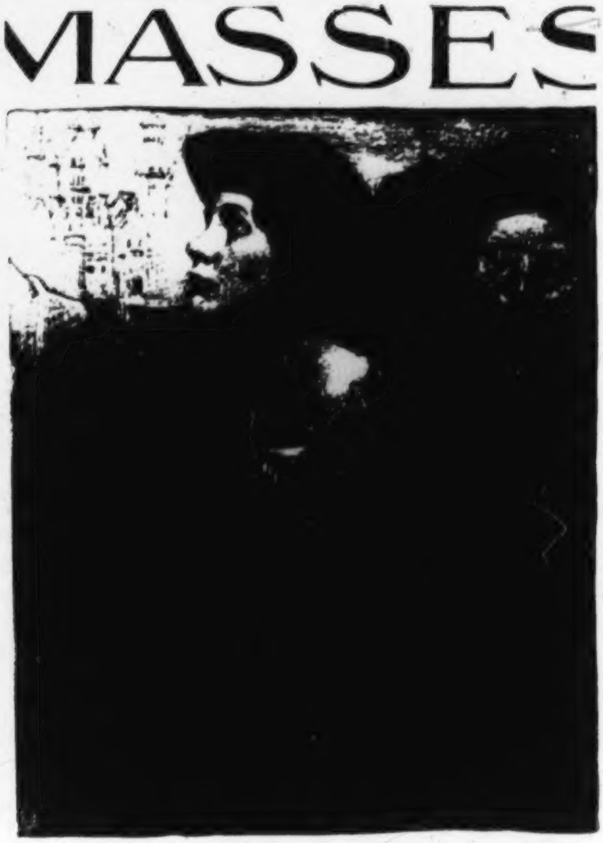
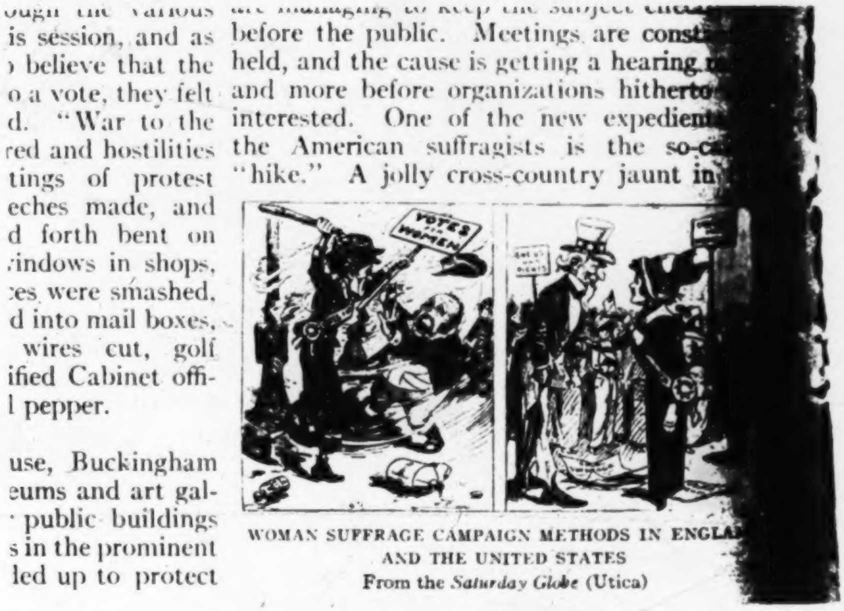


FIGURE 10.

Charles Allen Winter, The Militant,

The Masses 4 (August 1913), Cover



VOTES FOR WOMEN

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WOMAN SUFFRAGE CAMPAIGN METHODS IN ENGLA
AND THE UNITED STATES
From the *Saturday Globe* (Utica)

FIGURE 11.

Woman Suffrage Campaign Methods in England and the United States, reprint of Utica Saturday Globe cartoon in American Reviews of Reviews (March 1913), p. 272

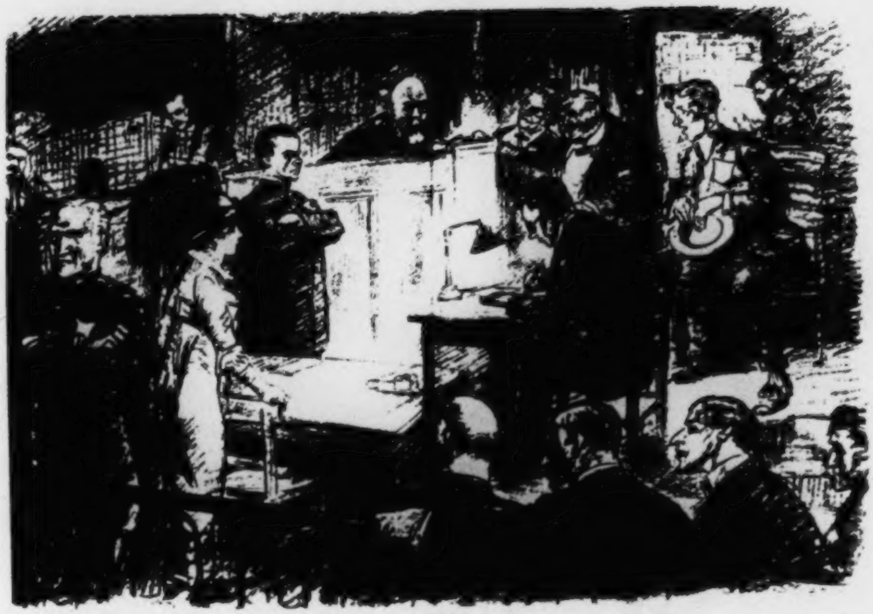
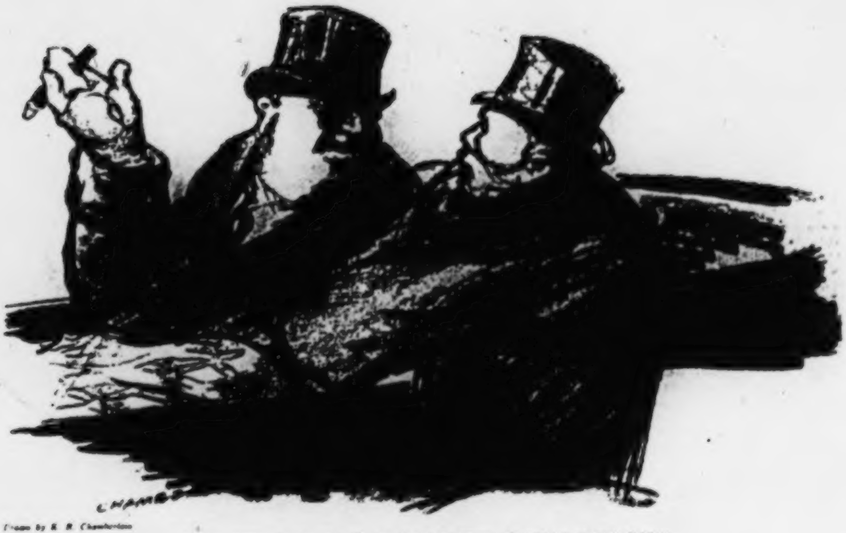


FIGURE 12.

John Sloan, The Women's Night Court: Before Her Makers and Her Judge,

The Masses 4 (August 1913), pp. 10–11



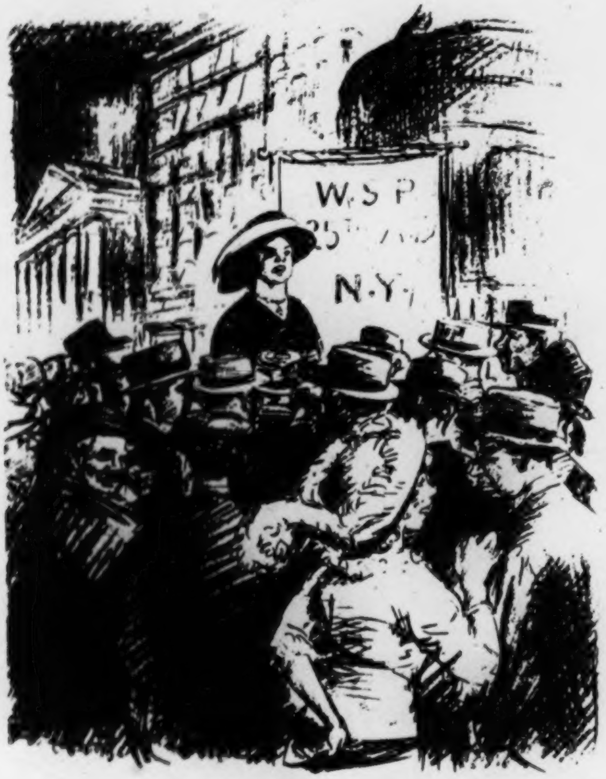
Drawn by K. R. Chamberlain

Paterson Rebuked

FIGURE 13.

Kenneth Chamberlain, "Woman Suffrage? I Guess Not!...",

The Masses 5 (December 1913), p. 19

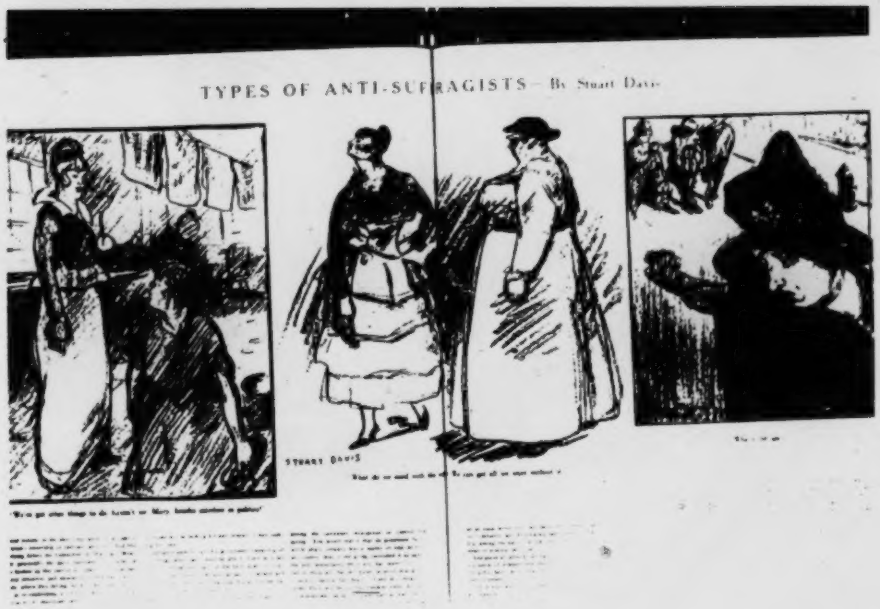


She's Got The Point

FIGURE 14.

John Sloan, She's Got the Point,

The Masses 5 (October 1913), p. 10



TYPES OF ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS — By Stuart Davis

FIGURE 15.

Stuart Davis, Types of Anti-Suffragists,

The Masses 7 (November 1915), pp. 14–15

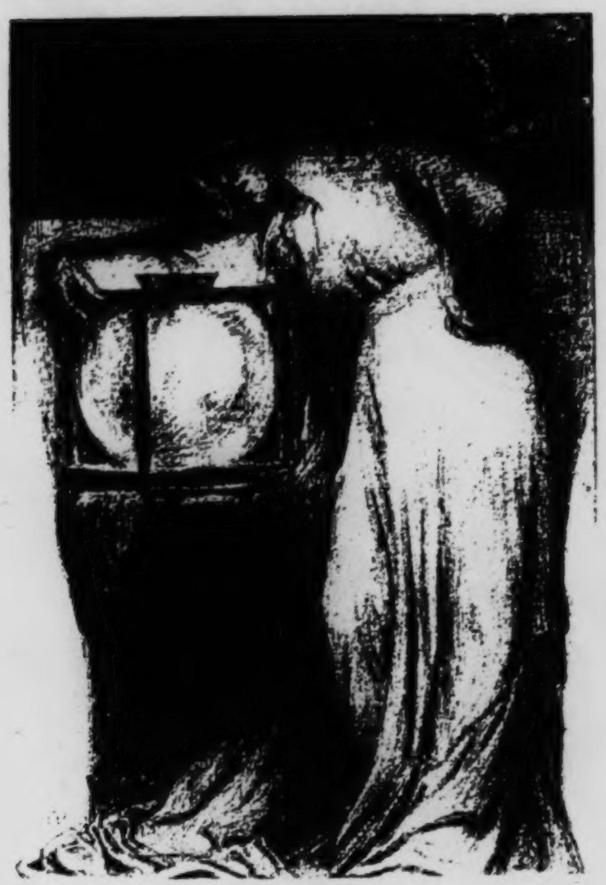


FIGURE 16.

Charles Allen Winter, Susana at the Ballot Box,

The Masses 4 (March 1913), p. 20, Back Cover

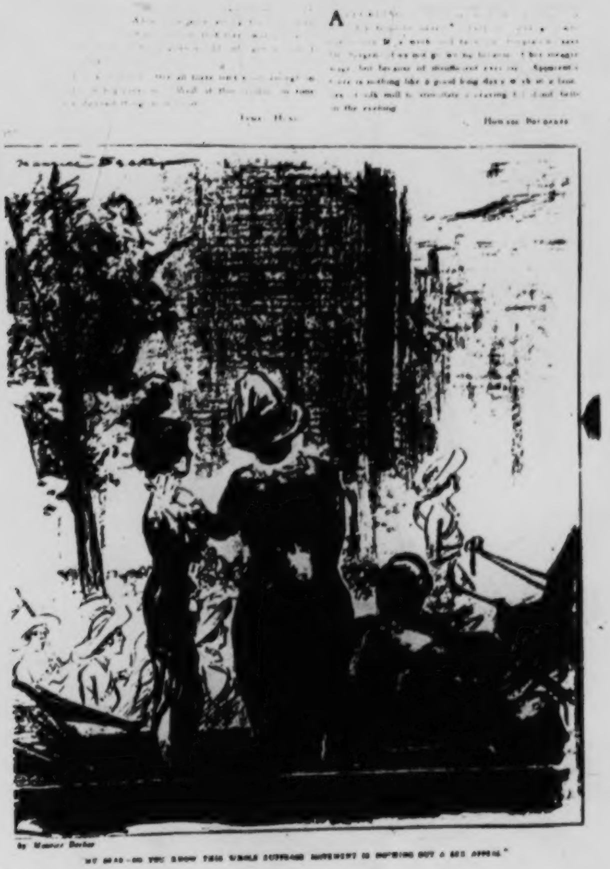
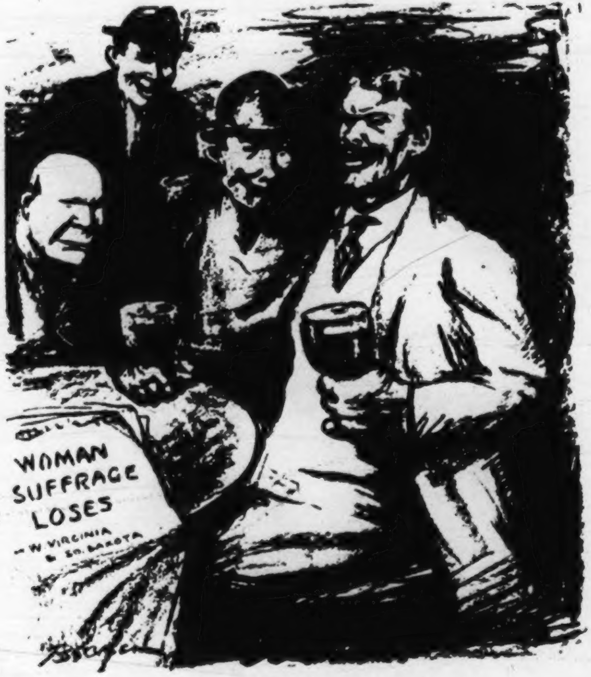


FIGURE 17.

Maurice Becker, "My Dear — Do You Know this Whole Suffrage Movement is Nothing but a Sex Appeal", The Masses 4 (July 1913), p. 15

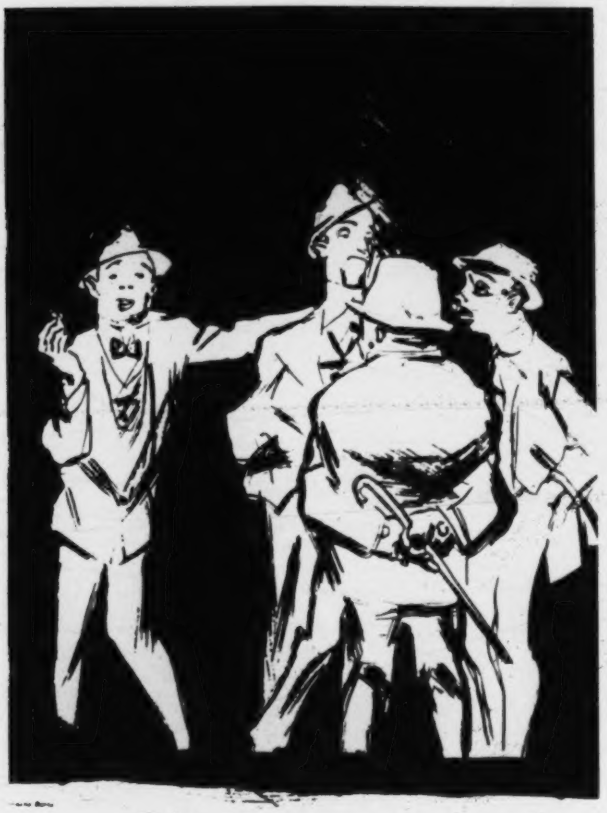

WOMAN SUFFRAGE LOSES
— W. VIRGINIA & SO. DAKOTA

“They Aint Our Equals Yet!”

FIGURE 18.

Maurice Becker, *“They Aint Our Equals Yet!”*,

The Masses 9 (January 1917), p. 19



VOTERS

FIGURE 19.

Cornelia Barns, Voters,

The Masses 8 (December 1915), p. 4